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The Gates of the Hills.

Works

MODERN PAINTERS

VOLUME IV—MOUNTAIN BEAUTY

VOLUME V—
- OF LEAF BEAUTY
- OF CLOUD BEAUTY
- OF IDEAS OF RELATION

BY

JOHN RUSKIN, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "THE SEVEN LAMPS OF ARCHITECTURE," "THE CROWN OF WILD OLIVE," "SESAME AND LILIES," ETC.

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To

THE LANDSCAPE ARTISTS OF ENGLAND

THIS WORK

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY THEIR SINCERE ADMIRER

THE AUTHOR

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PREFACE.

I WAS in hopes that this volume might have gone its way without preface; but as I look over the sheets, I find in them various fallings short of old purposes which require a word of explanation.

Of which shortcomings, the chief is the want of reference to the landscape of the Poussins and Salvator; my original intention having been to give various examples of their mountain-drawing, that it might be compared with Turner's. But the ten years intervening between the commencement of this work and its continuation have taught me, among other things, that Life is shorter and less availably divisible than I had supposed: and I think now that its hours may be better employed than in making facsimiles of bad work. It would have required the greatest care, and prolonged labor, to give uncaricatured representations of Salvator's painting, or of any other work depending on the free dashes of the brush, so as neither to mend nor mar it. Perhaps in the next volume I may give one or two examples associated with vegetation; but in general, I shall be content with directing the reader's attention to the facts in nature, and in Turner; leaving him to carry out for himself whatever comparisons he may judge expedient.

I am afraid, also, that disappointment may be felt at not finding plates of more complete subject illustrating these chapters on mountain beauty. But the analysis into which I had to enter required the dissection of draw-

ings, rather than their complete presentation; while, also, on the scale of any readable page, no effective presentation of large drawings could be given. Even my vignette, the frontispiece to the third volume, is partly spoiled by having too little white paper about it; and the fiftieth plate, from Turner's Goldau, necessarily omits, owing to its reduction, half the refinements of the foreground. It is quite waste of time and cost to reduce Turner's drawings at all; and I therefore consider these volumes only as *Guides* to them, hoping hereafter to illustrate some of the best on their own scale.

Several of the plates appear, in their present position, nearly unnecessary; 14 and 15, for instance, in Vol. III. These are illustrations of the chapters on the Firmament in the fifth volume; but I should have had the plates disproportionately crowded at last, if I had put all that it needed in that volume; and as these two bear somewhat on various matters spoken of in the third, I placed them where they are first alluded to. The frontispiece has chief reference to the same chapters; but seemed, in its three divisions, properly introductory to our whole subject. It is a simple sketch from nature, taken at sunset from the hills near Como, some two miles up the eastern side of the lake and about a thousand feet above it, looking towards Lugano. The sky is a little too heavy for the advantage of the landscape below; but I am not answerable for the sky. It was *there*.*

In the multitudinous letterings and references of this volume there may possibly be one or two awkward errata; but not so many as to make it necessary to delay the vol-

* Persons unacquainted with hill scenery are apt to forget that the sky of the mountains is often close to the spectator. A black thundercloud may literally be dashing itself in his face, while the blue hills seen through its rents may be thirty miles away. Generally speaking, we do not enough understand the nearness of many clouds, even in level countries, as compared with the land horizon. See also the close of § 12 in Chap. III. of this volume.

ume while I look it over again in search of them. The reader will perhaps be kind enough to note at once that in page 197, at the second line of the text, the words "general truth" refer to the angle-measurements, not to the diagrams; which latter are given merely for reference, and might cause some embarrassment if the statement of measured accuracy were supposed to refer to them.

One or two graver misapprehensions I had it in my mind to warn the reader against; but on the whole, as I have honestly tried to make the book intelligible, I believe it will be found intelligible by any one who thinks it worth a careful reading; and every day convinces me more and more that no warnings can preserve from misunderstanding those who have no desire to understand.

DENMARK HILL, March, 1856.

MODERN PAINTERS.

PART V.

OF MOUNTAIN BEAUTY.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE TURNERIAN PICTURESQUE.

§ 1. The work which we proposed to ourselves, towards the close of the last volume, as first to be undertaken in this, was the examination of those peculiarities of system in which Turner either stood alone, even in the modern school, or was a distinguished representative of modern, as opposed to ancient practice.

And the most interesting of these subjects of inquiry, with which, therefore, it may be best to begin, is the precise form under which he has admitted into his work the modern feeling of the picturesque, which, so far as it consists in a delight in ruin, is perhaps the most suspicious and questionable of all the characters distinctively belonging to our temper, and art.

It is especially so, because it never appears, even in the slightest measure, until the days of the decline of art in the seventeenth century. The love of neatness and precision, as opposed to all disorder, maintains itself down to Raphael's childhood without the slightest

interference of any other feeling; and it is not until Claude's time, and owing in great part to his influence, that the new feeling distinctly establishes itself.

Plate 18 shows the kind of modification which Claude used to make on the towers and backgrounds of Ghirlandajo; the old Florentine giving his idea of Pisa, with its leaning tower, with the utmost neatness and precision, and handsome youth riding over neat bridges on beautiful horses; Claude reducing the delicate towers and walls to unintelligible ruin, the well-built bridge to a rugged stone one, the handsome rider to a weary traveller, and the perfectly drawn leafage to confusion of copsewood or forest.*

How far he was right in doing this; or how far the moderns are right in carrying the principle to greater excess, and seeking always for poverty-stricken rusticity or pensive ruin, we must now endeavor to ascertain.

The essence of picturesque character has been already defined† to be a sublimity not inherent in the nature of the thing, but caused by something external to it; as the ruggedness of a cottage roof possesses something of a mountain aspect, not belonging to the cottage as such. And this sublimity may be either in mere external ruggedness, and other visible character, or it may lie deeper, in an expression of sorrow and old age, attributes which are both sublime; not a dominant expression, but one mingled with such familiar and common characters as prevent the object from becoming perfectly pathetic in its sorrow, or perfectly venerable in its age.

§ 2. For instance, I cannot find words to express the

* Ghirlandajo is seen to the greatest possible disadvantage in this place, as I have been forced again to copy from Lasinio, who leaves out all the light and shade, and vulgarizes every form; but the points requiring notice here are sufficiently shown, and I will do Ghirlandajo more justice hereafter.

† Seven Lamps of Architecture, chap. vi. § 12.

PLATE XVIII.—THE TRANSITION FROM GHIRLANDAJO TO CLAUDE.

intense pleasure I have always in first finding myself, after some prolonged stay in England, at the foot of the old tower of Calais church. The large neglect, the noble unsightliness of it; the record of its years written so visibly, yet without sign of weakness or decay; its stern wasteness and gloom, eaten away by the channel winds, and overgrown with the bitter sea-grasses; its slates and tiles all shaken and rent, and yet not falling; its desert of brickwork full of bolts, and holes, and ugly fissures, and yet strong, like a bare brown rock; its carelessness of what anyone thinks or feels about it, putting forth no claim, having no beauty nor desirableness, pride nor grace; yet neither asking for pity; not, as ruins are, useless and piteous, feebly or fondly garrulous of better days; but useful still, going through its own daily work, —as some old fisherman beaten gray by storm, yet drawing his daily nets: so it stands, with no complaint about its past youth, in blanched and meagre massiveness and serviceableness, gathering human souls together underneath it; the sound of its bells for prayer still rolling through its rents; and the gray peak of it seen far across the sea, principal of the three that rise above the waste of surfy sand and hillocked shore,—the lighthouse for life, and the belfry for labor, and this for patience and praise.

§ 3. I cannot tell the half of the strange pleasures and thoughts that come about me at the sight of that old tower; for, in some sort, it is the epitome of all that makes the Continent of Europe interesting, as opposed to new countries; and, above all, it completely expresses that agedness in the midst of active life which binds the old and the new into harmony. We, in England, have our new street, our new inn, our green shaven lawn, and our piece of ruin emergent from it,—a mere *specimen* of the middle ages put on a bit of velvet carpet to be shown, which, but for its size, might as well be on the

museum shelf at once, under cover. But, on the Continent, the links are unbroken between the past and present, and in such use as they can serve for, the gray-headed wrecks are suffered to stay with men; while, in unbroken line, the generations of spared buildings are seen succeeding each in its place. And thus in its largeness, in its permitted evidence of slow decline, in its poverty, in its absence of all pretence, of all show and care for outside aspect, that Calais tower has an infinite of symbolism in it, all the more striking because usually seen in contrast with English scenes expressive of feelings the exact reverse of these.

§ 4. And I am sorry to say that the opposition is most distinct in that noble carelessness as to what people think of it. Once, on coming from the Continent, almost the first inscription I saw in my native English was this:

"To Let, a Genteel House, up this road."

And it struck me forcibly, for I had not come across the idea of gentility, among the upper limestones of the Alps, for seven months; nor do I think that the Continental nations in general *have* the idea. They would have advertised a "pretty" house, or a "large" one, or a "convenient" one; but they could not, by any use of the terms afforded by their several languages, have got at the English "genteel." Consider, a little, all the meanness that there is in that epithet, and then see, when next you cross the Channel, how scornful of it that Calais spire will look.

§ 5. Of which spire the largeness and age are also opposed exactly to the chief appearances of modern England, as one feels them on first returning to it; that marvellous smallness both of houses and scenery, so that a ploughman in the valley has his head on a level with the tops of all the hills in the neighborhood; and a

house is organized into complete establishment,—parlor, kitchen, and all, with a knocker to its door, and a garret window to its roof, and a bow to its second story,* on a scale of twelve feet wide by fifteen high, so that three such at least would go into the granary of an ordinary Swiss cottage: and also our serenity of perfection, our peace of conceit, everything being done that vulgar minds can conceive as wanting to be done; the spirit of well-principled housemaids everywhere, exerting itself for perpetual propriety and renovation, so that nothing is old, but only "old-fashioned," and contemporary, as it were, in date and impressiveness only with last year's bonnets. Abroad, a building of the eighth or tenth century stands ruinous in the open street; the children play round it, the peasants heap their corn in it, the buildings of yesterday nestle about it, and fit their new stones into its rents and tremble in sympathy as it trembles. No one wonders at it, or thinks of it as separate, and of another time; we feel the ancient world to be a real thing, and one with the new: antiquity is no dream; it is rather the children playing about the old stones that are the dream. But all is continuous; and the words, "from generation to generation," understandable there. Whereas here we have a living present, consisting merely of what is "fashionable" and "old-fashioned;" and a past, of which there are no vestiges; a past which peasant or citizen can no more conceive; all equally far away; Queen Elizabeth as old as Queen Boadicea, and both incredible. At Verona we look out of Can Grande's window to his tomb; and if he does not stand beside us, we feel only that he is in the grave instead of the chamber, —not that he is *old*, but that he might have been beside us last night. But in England the dead are dead to

* The principal street of Canterbury has some curious examples of this *tininess*.

purpose. One cannot believe they ever were alive, or anything else than what they are now—names in school-books.

§ 6. Then that spirit of trimness. The smooth paving-stones; the scraped, hard, even, rutless roads; the neat gates and plates, and essence of border and order, and spikiness and spruceness. Abroad, a country-house has some confession of human weakness and human fates about it. There are the old grand gates still, which the mob pressed sore against at the Revolution, and the strained hinges have never gone so well since; and the broken greyhound on the pillar—still broken—better so; but the long avenue is gracefully pale with fresh green, and the courtyard bright with orange trees; the garden is a little run to waste—since Mademoiselle was married nobody cares much about it; and one range of apartments is shut up—nobody goes into them since Madame died. But with us, let who will be married or die, we neglect nothing. All is polished and precise again next morning; and whether people are happy or miserable, poor or prosperous, still we sweep the stairs of a Saturday.*

§ 7. Now, I have insisted long on this English character, because I want the reader to understand thoroughly the opposite element of the noble picturesque; its expression, namely, of *suffering*, of *poverty*, or *decay*, nobly endured by unpretending strength of heart. Nor only unpretending, but unconscious. If there be visible pensiveness in the building, as in a ruined abbey, it becomes, or claims to become, beautiful; but the picturesqueness is in the unconscious suffering,—the look that an old laborer has, not knowing that there is anything pathetic in his gray

* This, however, is of course true only of insignificant duties, necessary for appearance' sake. Serious duties, necessary for kindness' sake, must be permitted in any domestic affliction, under pain of shocking the English public.

hair, and withered arms, and sunburnt breast; and thus there are the two extremes, the consciousness of pathos in the confessed ruin, which may or may not be beautiful, according to the kind of it; and the entire denial of all human calamity and care, in the swept proprieties and neatness of English modernism: and, between these, there is the unconscious confession of the facts of distress and decay, in by-words; the world's hard work being gone through all the while, and no pity asked for, nor contempt feared. And this is the expression of that Calais spire, and of all picturesque things, in so far as they have mental or human expression at all.

§ 8. I say, in so far as they have mental expression, because their merely outward delightfulness—that which makes them pleasant in painting, or, in the literal sense, picturesque—is their actual variety of color and form. A broken stone has necessarily more various forms in it than a whole one; a bent roof has more various curves in it than a straight one; every excrescence or cleft involves some additional complexity of light and shade, and every stain of moss on eaves or wall adds to the delightfulness of color. Hence, in a completely picturesque object, as an old cottage or mill, there are introduced, by various circumstances, not essential to it, but, on the whole, generally somewhat detrimental to it as cottage or mill, such elements of sublimity—complex light and shade, varied color, undulatory form, and so on—as can generally be found only in noble natural objects, woods, rocks, or mountains. This sublimity, belonging in a parasitical manner to the building, renders it, in the usual sense of the word, "picturesque."

§ 9. Now, if this outward sublimity be sought for by the painter, without any regard for the real nature of the thing, and without any comprehension of the pathos of character hidden beneath, it forms the low school of the surface-picturesque; that which fills ordinary drawing-

books and scrap-books, and employs, perhaps, the most popular living landscape painters of France, England, and Germany. But if these same outward characters be sought for in subordination to the inner character of the object, every source of pleasurableness being refused which is incompatible with that, while perfect sympathy is felt at the same time with the object as to all that it tells of itself in those sorrowful by-words, we have the school of true or noble picturesque; still distinguished from the school of pure beauty and sublimity, because, in its subjects, the pathos and sublimity are all *by the way*, as in Calais' old spire,—not inherent, as in a lovely tree or mountain; while it is distinguished still more from the schools of the lower picturesque by its tender sympathy, and its refusal of all sources of pleasure inconsistent with the perfect nature of the thing to be studied.

§ 10. The reader will only be convinced of the broad scope of this law by careful thought, and comparison of picture with picture; but a single example will make the principle of it clear to him.

On the whole, the first master of the lower picturesque, among our living artists, is Clarkson Stanfield; his range of art being, indeed, limited by his pursuit of this character. I take, therefore, a windmill, forming the principal subject in his drawing of Brittany, near Dol (engraved in the Coast Scenery), Fig. 1, Plate 19, and beside it I place a windmill, which forms also the principal subject in Turner's study of the Lock, in the Liber Studiorum. At first sight I dare say the reader may like Stanfield's best; and there is, indeed, a great deal more in it to attract liking. Its roof is nearly as interesting in its ruggedness as a piece of the stony peak of a mountain, with a châlet built on its side; and it is exquisitely varied in swell and curve. Turner's roof, on the contrary, is a plain, ugly gable,—a windmill roof, and noth-

1. Pure Modern.

2. Turnerian.

PLATE XIX.—THE PICTURESQUE OF WINDMILLS.

ing more. Stanfield's sails are twisted into most effective wrecks, as beautiful as pine bridges over Alpine streams; only they do not look as if they had ever been serviceable windmill sails; they are bent about in cross and awkward ways, as if they were warped or cramped; and their timbers look heavier than necessary. Turner's sails have no beauty about them like that of Alpine bridges; but they have the exact switchy sway of the sail that is always straining against the wind; and the timbers form clearly the lightest possible framework for the canvas,—thus showing the essence of windmill sail. Then the clay wall of Stanfield's mill is as beautiful as a piece of chalk cliff, all worn into furrows by the rain, coated with mosses, and rooted to the ground by a heap of crumbled stone, embroidered with grass and creeping plants. But this is not a serviceable state for a windmill to be in. The essence of a windmill, as distinguished from all other mills, is, that it should turn round, and be a spinning thing, ready always to face the wind; as light, therefore, as possible, and as vibratory; so that it is in no wise good for it to approximate itself to the nature of chalk cliffs.

Now observe how completely Turner has chosen his mill so as to mark this great fact of windmill nature; how high he has set it; how slenderly he has supported it; how he has built it all of wood; how he has bent the lower planks so as to give the idea of the building lapping over the pivot on which it rests inside; and how, finally, he has insisted on the great leverage of the beam behind it, while Stanfield's lever looks more like a prop than a thing to turn the roof with. And he has done all this fearlessly, though none of these elements of form are pleasant ones in themselves, but tend, on the whole, to give a somewhat mean and spider-like look to the principal feature in his picture; and then, finally, because he could not get the windmill dissected, and show

us the real heart and centre of the whole, behold, he has put a pair of old millstones, *lying outside*, at the bottom of it. These—the first cause and motive of all the fabric—laid at its foundation; and beside them the cart which is to fulfil the end of the fabric's being, and take home the sacks of flour.

§ 11. So far of what each painter chooses to draw. But do not fail also to consider the spirit in which it is drawn. Observe, that though all this ruin has befallen Stanfield's mill, Stanfield is not in the least sorry for it. On the contrary, he is delighted, and evidently thinks it the most fortunate thing possible. The owner is ruined, doubtless, or dead; but his mill forms an admirable object in our view of Brittany. So far from being grieved about it, we will make it our principal light;—if it were a fruit-tree in spring-blossom, instead of a desolate mill, we could not make it whiter or brighter; we illume our whole picture with it, and exult over its every rent as a special treasure and possession.

Not so Turner. *His* mill is still serviceable; but, for all that, he feels somewhat pensive about it. It is a poor property, and evidently the owner of it has enough to do to get his own bread out from between its stones. Moreover, there is a dim type of all melancholy human labor in it,—catching the free winds, and setting them to turn grindstones. It is poor work for the winds; better, indeed, than drowning sailors or tearing down forests, but not their proper work of marshalling the clouds, and bearing the wholesome rains to the place where they are ordered to fall, and fanning the flowers and leaves when they are faint with heat. Turning round a couple of stones, for the mere pulverization of human food, is not noble work for the winds. So, also, of all low labor to which one sets human souls. It is better than no labor; and, in a still higher degree, better than destructive wandering of imagination; but yet, that grinding in the

darkness, for mere food's sake, must be melancholy work enough for many a living creature. All men have felt it so; and this grinding at the mill, whether it be breeze or soul that is set to it, we cannot much rejoice in. Turner has no joy of his mill. It shall be dark against the sky, yet proud, and on the hill-top; not ashamed of its labor, and brightened from beyond, the golden clouds stooping over it, and the calm summer sun going down behind, far away, to his rest.

§ 12. Now in all this observe how the higher condition of art (for I suppose the reader will feel, with me, that Turner's *is* the highest) depends upon largeness of sympathy. It is mainly because the one painter has communion of heart with his subject, and the other only casts his eyes upon it feelinglessly, that the work of the one is greater than that of the other. And, as we think farther over the matter, we shall see that this is indeed the eminent cause of the difference between the lower picturesque and the higher. For, in a certain sense, the lower picturesque ideal is eminently a *heartless* one: the lover of it seems to go forth into the world in a temper as merciless as its rocks. All other men feel some regret at the sight of disorder and ruin. He alone delights in both; it matters not of what. Fallen cottage—desolate villa—deserted village—blasted heath—mouldering castle—to him, so that they do but show jagged angles of stone and timber, all are sights equally joyful. Poverty, and darkness, and guilt, bring in their several contributions to his treasury of pleasant thoughts. The shattered window, opening into black and ghastly rents of wall, the foul rag or straw wisp stopping them, the dangerous roof, decrepit floor and stair, ragged misery or wasting age of the inhabitants,—all these conduce, each in due measure, to the fulness of his satisfaction. What is it to him that the old man has passed his seventy years in helpless darkness and untaught waste of soul? The old

man has at last accomplished his destiny, and filled the corner of a sketch, where something of an unshapely nature was wanting. What is it to him that the people fester in that feverish misery in the low quarter of the town, by the river? Nay, it is much to him. What else were they made for? what could they have done better? The black timbers, and the green water, and the soaking wrecks of boats, and the torn remnants of clothes hung out to dry in the sun;—truly the fever-struck creatures, whose lives have been given for the production of these materials of effect, have not died in vain.*

* I extract from my private diary a passage bearing somewhat on the matter in hand:—

"Amiens, 11th May, 18—. I had a happy walk here this afternoon, down among the branching currents of the Somme; it divides into five or six,—shallow, green, and not over-wholesome; some quite narrow and foul, running beneath clusters of fearful houses, reeling masses of rotten timber; and a few mere stumps of pollard willow sticking out of the banks of soft mud, only retained in shape of bank by being shored up with timbers; and boats like paper boats, nearly as thin at least, for the costermongers to paddle about in among the weeds, the water soaking through the lath bottoms, and floating the dead leaves from the vegetable-baskets with which they were loaded. Miserable little back yards, opening to the water, with steep stone steps down to it, and little platforms for the ducks; and separate duck staircases, composed of a sloping board with cross bits of wood leading to the ducks' doors; and sometimes a flower-pot or two on them, or even a flower,—one group, of wallflowers and geraniums, curiously vivid, being seen against the darkness of a dyer's back yard, who had been dyeing black all day, and all was black in his yard but the flowers, and they fiery and pure; the water by no means so, but still working its way steadily over the weeds, until it narrowed into a current strong enough to turn two or three mill-wheels, one working against the side of an old flamboyant Gothic church, whose richly traceried buttresses sloped into the filthy stream;—all exquisitely picturesque, and no less miserable. We delight in seeing the figures in these boats pushing them about the bits of blue water, in Prout's drawings; but as I looked to-day at the unhealthy face and melancholy mien of the man in the boat pushing his load of peats along the ditch, and of the people, men as well as women, who sat spinning gloomily at the cottage doors, I could not help feeling how many

§ 13. Yet, for all this, I do not say the lover of the lower picturesque is a monster in human form. He is by no means this, though truly we might at first think so, if we came across him unawares, and had not met with any such sort of person before. Generally speaking, he is kind-hearted, innocent of evil, but not broad in thought; somewhat selfish, and incapable of acute sympathy with others; gifted at the same time with strong artistic instincts and capacities for the enjoyment of varied form, and light, and shade, in pursuit of which enjoyment his life is passed, as the lives of other men are, for the most part, in the pursuit of what *they* also like,—be it honor, or money, or indolent pleasure,—very irrespective of the poor people living by the stagnant canal. And, in some sort, the hunter of the picturesque is better than many of these; inasmuch as he is simple-minded and capable of unostentatious and economical delights, which, if not very helpful to other people, are at all events utterly uninjurious, even to the victims or subjects of his picturesque fancies; while to many others his work is entertaining and useful. And, more than all this, even that delight which he *seems* to take in misery is not altogether unvirtuous. Through all his enjoyment there runs a certain under current of tragical passion,—a real vein of human sympathy;—it lies at the root of all those strange morbid hauntings of his; a sad excitement, such as other people feel at a tragedy, only less in degree, just enough, indeed, to give a deeper tone to his pleasure, and to make him choose for his subject the broken stones of a cottage wall, rather than of a roadside bank, the picturesque beauty of form in each being supposed precisely the same: and, together with this slight tragical feeling, there is also a humble and romantic sympathy; a vague desire, in his own mind, to

suffering persons must pay for my picturesque subject and happy walk."

live in cottages rather than in palaces; a joy in humble things, a contentment and delight in makeshifts, a secret persuasion (in many respects a true one) that there is in these ruined cottages a happiness often quite as great as in king's palaces, and a virtue and nearness to God infinitely greater and holier than can commonly be found in any other kind of place; so that the misery in which he exults is not, as he sees it, misery, but nobleness,—"poor, and sick in body, and beloved by the Gods."* And thus, being nowise sure that these things can be mended at all, and very sure that he knows not how to mend them, and also that the strange pleasure he feels in them *must* have some good reason in the nature of things, he yields to his destiny, enjoys his dark canal without scruple, and mourns over every improvement in the town, and every movement made by its sanitary commissioners, as a miser would over a planned robbery of his chest; in all this being not only innocent, but even respectable and admirable, compared with the kind of person who has *no* pleasure in sights of this kind, but only in fair façades, trim gardens, and park palings, and who would thrust all poverty and misery out of his way, collecting it into back alleys, or sweeping it finally out of the world, so that the street might give wider play for his chariot wheels, and the breeze less offence to his nobility.

§ 14. Therefore, even the love for the lower picturesque ought to be cultivated with care, wherever it exists; not with any special view to the artistic, but to merely humane, education. It will never really or seriously interfere with practical benevolence; on the contrary, it will constantly lead, if associated with other benevolent principles, to a truer sympathy with the poor, and better understanding of the right ways of helping them; and,

* Epitaph on Epictetus.

in the present stage of civilization, it is the most important element of character, not directly moral, which can be cultivated in youth; since it is mainly for the want of this feeling that we destroy so many ancient monuments, in order to erect "handsome" streets and shops instead, which might just as well have been erected elsewhere, and whose effect on our minds, so far as they have any, is to increase every disposition to frivolity, expense, and display.

These, and such other considerations not directly connected with our subject, I shall, perhaps, be able to press farther at the close of my work; meantime, we turn to the immediate question, of the distinction between the lower and higher picturesque, and the artists who pursue them.

§ 15. It is evident, from what has been advanced, that there is no definite bar of separation between the two; but that the dignity of the picturesque increases from lower to higher, in exact proportion to the sympathy of the artist with his subject. And in like manner his own greatness depends (other things being equal) on the extent of this sympathy. If he rests content with narrow enjoyment of outward forms, and light sensations of luxurious tragedy, and so goes on multiplying his sketches of mere picturesque material, he necessarily settles down into the ordinary "clever" artist, very good and respectable, maintaining himself by his sketching and painting in an honorable way, as by any other daily business, and in due time passing away from the world without having, on the whole, done much for it. Such has been the necessary, not very lamentable, destiny of a large number of men in these days, whose gifts urged them to the practice of art, but who possessing no breadth of mind, nor having met with masters capable of concentrating what gifts they had towards nobler use, almost perforce remained in their small picturesque

circle; getting more and more narrowed in range of sympathy as they fell more and more into the habit of contemplating the one particular class of subjects that pleased them, and recomposing them by rules of art.

I need not give instances of this class, we have very few painters who belong to any other; I only pause for a moment to *except* from it a man too often confounded with the draughtsmen of the lower picturesque;—a very great man, who, though partly by chance, and partly by choice, limited in range of subject, possessed for that subject the profoundest and noblest sympathy—Samuel Prout. His renderings of the character of old buildings, such as that spire of Calais, are as perfect and as heart-felt as I can conceive possible; nor do I suppose that anyone else will ever hereafter equal them.* His early works show that he possessed a grasp of mind which could have entered into almost any kind of landscape subject; that it was only chance—I do not know if altogether evil chance—which fettered him to stones; and that in reality he is to be numbered among the true masters of the nobler picturesque.

§ 16. Of these, also, the ranks rise in worthiness, according to their sympathy. In the noblest of them, that sympathy seems quite unlimited; they enter with their whole heart into all nature; their love of grace and beauty keeps them from delighting too much in shattered stones and stunted trees, their kindness and compassion from dwelling by choice on any kind of misery, their perfect humility from avoiding simplicity of subject when it comes in their way, and their grasp of the highest thoughts from seeking a lower sublimity in cottage walls and penthouse roofs. And, whether it be home of English village thatched with straw and walled with clay, or of Italian city vaulted with gold and roofed with

* I believe when a thing is once *well done* in this world, it never can be done *over again*.

marble; whether it be stagnant stream under ragged willow, or glancing fountain between arcades of laurel, all to them will bring equal power of happiness, and equal field for thought.

§ 17. Turner is the only artist who hitherto has furnished the entire *type* of this perfection. The attainment of it in all respects is, of course, impossible to man; but the complete type of such a mind has once been seen in him, and, I think, existed also in Tintoret; though, as far as I know, Tintoret has not left any work which indicates sympathy with the *humor* of the world. Paul Veronese, on the other hand, had sympathy with its humor, but not with its deepest tragedy or horror. Rubens wants the feeling for grace and mystery. And so, as we pass through the list of great painters, we shall find in each of them some local narrowness. Now, I do not, of course, mean to say that Turner has accomplished all to which his sympathy prompted him; necessarily, the very breadth of effort involved, in some directions, manifest failure; but he has shown, in casual incidents and by-ways, a range of *feeling* which no other painter, as far as I know, can equal. He cannot, for instance, draw children at play as well as Mulready; but just glean out of his works the evidence of his sympathy with children;—look at the girl putting her bonnet on the dog, in the foreground of the Richmond, Yorkshire; the juvenile tricks and "marine dabblers" of the Liber Studiorum; the boys scrambling after their kites in the woods of the Greta and Buckfastleigh; and the notable and most pathetic drawing of the Kirkby Lonsdale churchyard, with the schoolboys making a fortress of their larger books on the tombstone, to bombard with the more projectile volumes; and passing from these to the intense horror and pathos of the Rizpah, consider for yourself whether there was ever any other painter who could strike such

an octave. Whether there has been or not, in other walks of art, this power of sympathy is unquestionably in landscape unrivalled; and it will be one of our pleasantest future tasks to analyze in his various drawing the character it always gives; a character, indeed, more or less marked in all good work whatever, but to which, being pre-eminent in him, I shall always hereafter give the name of the "*Turnerian Picturesque.*"

CHAPTER II.

OF TURNERIAN TOPOGRAPHY.

§ 1. We saw, in the course of the last chapter, with what kind of feeling an artist ought to regard the character of every object he undertakes to paint. The next question is, what objects he *ought* to undertake to paint; how far he should be influenced by his feelings in the choice of subjects; and how far he should permit himself to alter, or, in the usual art language, improve, nature. For it has already been stated (Vol. III. Chap. iii. § 21), that all great art must be inventive; that is to say, its subject must be produced by the imagination. If so, then great landscape art cannot be a mere copy of any given scene; and we have now to inquire what else than this it may be.

§ 2. If the reader will glance over that twenty-first, and the following three paragraphs of the same chapter, he will see that we there divided art generally into "historical" and "poetical," or the art of relating facts simply, and facts imaginatively. Now, with respect to landscape, the historical art is simple topography, and the imaginative art is what I have in the heading of the present chapter called Turnerian topography, and must in the course of it endeavor to explain.

Observe, however, at the outset, that, touching the duty or fitness of altering nature at all, the quarrels which have so wofully divided the world of art are caused only by want of understanding this simplest of

all canons,—"It is always wrong to draw what you don't see." This law is inviolable. But then, some people see only things that exist, and others see things that do not exist, or do not exist apparently. And if they really *see* these non-apparent things, they are quite right to draw them; the only harm is when people try to draw non-apparent things, who *don't* see them, but think they can calculate or compose into existence what is to them for evermore invisible. If some people really see angels where others see only empty space, let them paint the angels; only let not anybody else think *they* can paint an angel, too, on any calculated principles of the angelic.

§ 3. If, therefore, when we go to a place, we see nothing else than is there, we are to paint nothing else, and to remain pure topographical or historical landscape painters. If, going to the place, we see something quite different from what is there, then we are to paint that—nay, we *must* paint that, whether we will or not; it being, for us, the only reality we can get at. But let us beware of pretending to see this unreality if we do not.

The simple observance of this rule would put an end to nearly all disputes, and keep a large number of men in healthy work, who now totally waste their lives; so that the most important question that an artist can possibly have to determine for himself, is whether he has invention or not. And this he can ascertain with ease. If visions of unreal things present themselves to him with or without his own will, praying to be painted, quite ungovernable in their coming or going,—neither to be summoned if they do not choose to come, nor banished if they do,—he has invention. If, on the contrary, he only sees the commonly visible facts; and, should he not like them, and want to alter them, finds that he must think of a *rule* whereby to do so, he has no invention. All the rules in the world will do him no good;

and if he tries to draw anything else than those materially visible facts, he will pass his whole life in uselessness, and produce nothing but scientific absurdities.

§ 4. Let him take his part at once, boldly, and be content. Pure history and pure topography are most precious things; in many cases more useful to the human race than high imaginative work; and assuredly it is intended that a large majority of all who are employed in art should never aim at anything higher. It is *only* vanity, never love, nor any other noble feeling, which prompts men to desert their allegiance to the simple truth, in vain pursuit of the imaginative truth which has been appointed to be for evermore sealed to them.

Nor let it be supposed that artists who possess minor degrees of imaginative gift need be embarrassed by the doubtful sense of their own powers. In general, when the imagination is at all noble, it is irresistible, and therefore those who can at all resist it *ought* to resist it. Be a plain topographer if you possibly can; if Nature meant you to be anything else, she will force you to it; but never try to be a prophet; go on quietly with your hard camp-work, and the spirit will come to you in the camp, as it did to Eldad and Medad, if you are appointed to have it; but try above all things to be quickly perceptive of the noble spirit in others, and to discern in an instant between its true utterance and the diseased mimicries of it. In a general way, remember it is a far better thing to find out other great men, than to become one yourself: for you can but become *one* at best, but you may bring others to light in numbers.

§ 5. We have, therefore, to inquire what kind of changes these are, which must be wrought by the imaginative painter on landscape, and by whom they have been thus nobly wrought. First, for the better comfort of the non-imaginative painter, be it observed, that it is not possible to find a landscape, which, if painted pre-

cisely as it is, will not make an impressive picture. No one knows, till he has tried, what strange beauty and subtle composition is prepared to his hand by Nature, wherever she is left to herself; and what deep feeling may be found in many of the most homely scenes, even where man has interfered with those wild ways of hers. But, beyond this, let him note that though historical topography forbids *alteration*, it neither forbids sentiment nor choice. So far from doing this, the proper choice of subject* is an absolute duty to the topographical painter: he should first take care that it is a subject intensely pleasing to himself, else he will never paint it well; and then also, that it shall be one in some sort pleasurable to the general public, else it is not worth painting at all; and lastly, take care that it be instructive, as well as pleasurable to the public, else it is not worth painting with care. I should particularly insist at present on this careful choice of subject, because the Pre-Raphaelites, taken as a body, have been culpably negligent in this respect, not in humble honor of Nature, but in morbid indulgence of their own impressions. They happen to find their fancies caught by a bit of an oak hedge, or the weeds at the sides of a duck-pond, because, perhaps, they remind them of a stanza of Tennyson; and forthwith they sit down to sacrifice the most consummate skill, two or three months of the best summer time available for out-door work (equivalent to some seventieth or sixtieth of all their lives), and nearly all their credit with the public, to this duck-pond

* Observe, what was said in the second volume respecting the spirit of choice as evil, refers only to young students, and to that choice which assumes that any common subject is not good enough, nor interesting enough, to be studied. But, though all is good for study, and all is beautiful, some is better than the rest for the help and pleasure of others; and this it is our duty always to choose, if we have opportunity, being quite happy with what is within our reach, if we have not.

delineation. Now it is indeed quite right that they should see much to be loved in the hedge, nor less in the ditch; but it is utterly and inexcusably wrong that they should neglect the nobler scenery which is full of majestic interest, or enchanted by historical association; so that, as things go at present, we have all the commonalty that may be seen whenever we choose, painted properly; but all of lovely and wonderful, which we cannot see but at rare intervals, painted vilely: the castles of the Rhine and Rhone made vignettes of for the annuals; and the nettles and mushrooms, which were prepared by Nature eminently for nettle porridge and fish sauce, immortalized by art as reverently as if we were Egyptians, and they deities.

§ 6. Generally speaking, therefore, the duty of every painter at present, who has not much invention, is to take subjects of which the portraiture will be precious in after times; views of our abbeys and cathedrals; distant views of cities, if possible chosen from some spot in itself notable by association; perfect studies of the battle-fields of Europe, of all houses of celebrated men, and places they loved, and, of course, of the most lovely natural scenery. And, in doing all this, it should be understood, primarily, whether the picture is topographical or not: if topographical, then not a line is to be altered, not a stick nor stone removed, not a color deepened, not a form improved; the picture is to be, as far as possible, the reflection of the place in a mirror; and the artist to consider himself only as a sensitive and skilful reflector, taking care that no false impression is conveyed by any error on his part which he might have avoided; so that it may be for ever afterwards in the power of all men to lean on his work with absolute trust, and to say: "So it was:—on such a day of June or July of such a year, such a place looked like this; these weeds were growing there, so tall and no taller;

those stones were lying there, so many and no more; that tower so rose against the sky, and that shadow so slept upon the street."

§ 7. Nor let it be supposssd that the doing of this would ever become mechanical, or be found too easy, or exclude sentiment. As for its being easy, those only think so who never tried it; composition being, in fact, infinitely easier to a man who *can* compose, than imitation of this high kind to even the most able imitator; nor would it exclude sentiment, for, however sincerely we may try to paint all we see, this *cannot*, as often aforesaid, be ever done: all that is possible is a certain selection, and more or less wilful assertion, of one fact in preference to another; which selection ought always to be made under the influence of sentiment. Nor will such topography involve an entire submission to ugly accidents interfering with the impressiveness of the scene. I hope, as art is better understood, that our painters will get into the habit of accompanying all their works with a written statement of their own reasons for painting them, and the circumstances under which they were done; and, if in this written document they state the omissions they have made, they may make as many as they think proper. For instance, it is not possible now to obtain a view of the head of the Lake of Geneva without including the "Hôtel Biron"—an establishment looking like a large cotton factory—just above the Castle of Chillon. This building ought always to be omitted, and the reason for the omission stated. So the beauty of the whole town of Lucerne, as seen from the lake, is destroyed by the large new hotel for the English, which ought, in like manner, to be ignored, and the houses behind it drawn as if it were transparent.

§ 8. But if a painter has inventive power he has to treat his subject in a totally different way; giving not

the actual facts of it, but the impression it made on his mind.

And now, once for all, let it be clearly understood that an "impression on the mind" does not mean a piece of manufacture. The way in which most artists proceed to "invent," as they call it, a picture, is this: they choose their subject, for the most part, well, with a sufficient quantity of towers, mountains, ruined cottages, and other materials, to be generally interesting; then they fix on some object for a principal light; behind this they put a dark cloud, or, in front of it, a dark piece of foreground; then they repeat this light somewhere else in a less degree, and connect the two lights together by some intermediate ones. If they find any part of the foreground uninteresting they put a group of figures into it; if any part of the distance, they put something there from some other sketch; and proceed to inferior detail in the same manner, taking care always to put white stones near black ones, and purple colors near yellow ones, and angular forms near round ones;—all being as simply a matter of recipe and practice as cookery; like that, not by any means a thing easily done well, but still having no reference whatever to "impressions on the mind."

§ 9. But the artist who has real invention sets to work in a totally different way. First, he receives a true impression from the place itself, and takes care to keep hold of that as his chief good; indeed, he needs no care in the matter, for the distinction of his mind from that of others consists in his instantly receiving such sensations strongly, and being unable to lose them; and then he sets himself as far as possible to reproduce that impression on the mind of the spectator of his picture.

Now, observe, this impression on the mind never results from the mere piece of scenery which can be included within the limits of the picture. It depends on

the temper into which the mind has been brought, both by all the landscape round, and by what has been seen previously in the course of the day; so that no particular spot upon which the painter's glance may at any moment fall, is then to him what, if seen by itself, it will be to the spectator far away; nor is it what it would be, even to that spectator, if he had come to the reality through the steps which Nature has appointed to be the preparation for it, instead of seeing it isolated on an exhibition wall. For instance, on the descent of the St. Gothard, towards Italy, just after passing through the narrow gorge above Faido, the road emerges into a little breadth of valley, which is entirely filled by fallen stones and débris, partly disgorged by the Ticino as it leaps out of the narrower chasm, and partly brought down by winter avalanches from a loose and decomposing mass of mountain on the left. Beyond this first promontory is seen a considerably higher range, but not an imposing one, which rises above the village of Faido. The etching, Plate 20, is a topographical outline of the scene, with the actual blocks of rock which happened to be lying in the bed of the Ticino at the spot from which I chose to draw it. The masses of loose débris (which, for any permanent purpose, I had no need to draw, as their arrangement changes at every flood) I have not drawn, but only those features of the landscape which happen to be of some continual importance. Of which note, first, that the little three-windowed building on the left is the remnant of a gallery built to protect the road, which once went on that side, from the avalanches and stones that come down the "couloir"* in the rock above. It is only a ruin, the greater part having been by said avalanches swept away, and the old road, of which a rem-

* "Couloir" is a good untranslatable Savoyard word, for a place down which stones and water fall in storms; it is perhaps deserving of naturalization.

PLATE XX.—PASS OF FAIDO. (1st Simple Topography.)

nant is also seen on the extreme left, abandoned, and carried now along the hillside on the right, partly sustained on rough stone arches, and winding down, as seen in the sketch, to a weak wooden bridge, which enables it to recover its old track past the gallery. It seems formerly (but since the destruction of the gallery) to have gone about a mile farther down the river on the right bank, and then to have been carried across by a longer wooden bridge, of which only the two abutments are seen in the sketch, the rest having been swept away by the Ticino, and the new bridge erected near the spectator.

§ 10. There is nothing in this scene, taken by itself, particularly interesting or impressive. The mountains are not elevated, nor particularly fine in form, and the heaps of stones which encumber the Ticino present nothing notable to the ordinary eye. But, in reality, the place is approached through one of the narrowest and most sublime ravines in the Alps, and after the traveller during the early part of the day has been familiarized with the aspect of the highest peaks of the Mont St. Gothard. Hence it speaks quite another language to him from that in which it would address itself to an unprepared spectator: the confused stones, which by themselves would be almost without any claim upon his thoughts, become exponents of the fury of the river by which he has journeyed all day long; the defile beyond, not in itself narrow or terrible, is regarded nevertheless with awe, because it is imagined to resemble the gorge that has just been traversed above; and, although no very elevated mountains immediately overhang it, the scene is felt to belong to, and arise in its essential characters out of, the strength of those mightier mountains in the unseen north.

§ 11. Any topographical delineation of the facts, therefore, must be wholly incapable of arousing in the mind

of the beholder those sensations which would be caused by the facts themselves, seen in their natural relations to others. And the aim of the great inventive landscape painter must be to give the far higher and deeper truth of mental vision, rather than that of the physical facts, and to reach a representation which, though it may be totally useless to engineers, geographers, and, when tried by rule and measure, totally unlike the place, shall yet be capable of producing on the far-away beholder's mind precisely the impression which the reality would have produced, and putting his heart into the same state in which it would have been, had he verily descended into the valley from the gorges of Airolo.

§ 12. Now observe; if in his attempt to do this the artist does not understand the sacredness of the truth of *Impression*, and supposes that, once quitting hold of his first thought, he may by Philosophy compose something prettier than he saw, and mightier than he felt, it is all over with him. Every such attempt at composition will be utterly abortive, and end in something that is neither true nor fanciful; something geographically useless, and intellectually absurd.

But if, holding fast his first thought, he finds other ideas insensibly gathering to it, and, whether he will or not, modifying it into something which is not so much the image of the place itself, as the spirit of the place, let him yield to such fancies, and follow them wherever they lead. For, though error on this side is very rare among us in these days, it *is* possible to check these finer thoughts by mathematical accuracies, so as materially to impair the imaginative faculty. I shall be able to explain this better after we have traced the actual operation of Turner's mind on the scene under discussion.

§ 13. Turner was always from his youth fond of stones (we shall see presently why). Whether large or small,

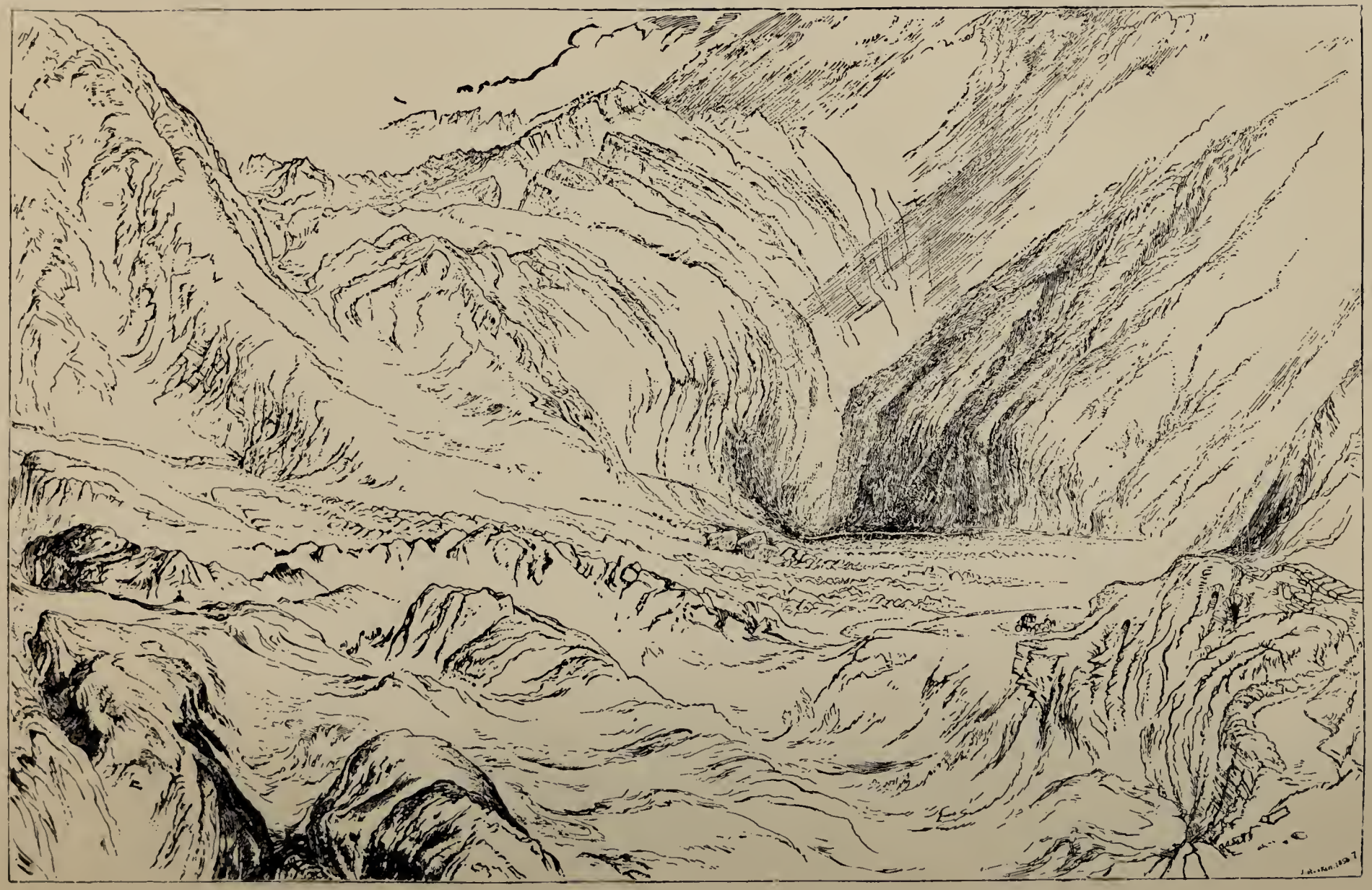


PLATE XXI.—PASS OF FAIDO. (2d Turnerian Topography.)

loose or embedded, hewn into cubes or worn into boulders, he loved them as much as William Hunt loves pineapples and plums. So that this great litter of fallen stones, which to anyone else would have been simply disagreeable, was to Turner much the same as if the whole valley had been filled with plums and pineapples, and delighted him exceedingly, much more than even the gorge of Dazio Grande just above. But that gorge had its effect upon him also, and was still not well out of his head when the diligence stopped at the bottom of the hill, just at that turn of the road on the right of the bridge; which favorable opportunity Turner seized to make what he called a "memorandum" of the place, composed of a few pencil scratches on a bit of thin paper, that would roll up with others of the sort and go into his pocket afterwards. These pencil scratches he put a few blots of color upon (I suppose at Bellinzona the same evening, certainly *not* upon the spot), and showed me this blotted sketch when he came home. I asked him to make me a drawing of it, which he did, and casually told me afterwards (a rare thing for him to do) that he liked the drawing he had made. Of this drawing I have etched a reduced outline in Plate 21.

§ 14. In which, primarily, observe that the whole place is altered in scale, and brought up to the general majesty of the higher forms of the Alps. It will be seen that, in my topographical sketch, there are a few trees rooted in the rock on this side of the gallery, showing by comparison, that it is not above four or five hundred feet high. These trees Turner cuts away, and gives the rock a height of about a thousand feet, so as to imply more power and danger in the avalanche coming down the couloir.

Next, he raises, in a still greater degree, all the mountains beyond, putting three or four ranges instead of one, but uniting them into a single massy bank at their

base, which he makes overhang the valley, and thus reduces it nearly to such a chasm as that which he had just passed through above, so as to unite the expression of this ravine with that of the stony valley. A few trees, in the hollow of the glen, he feels to be contrary in spirit to the stones, and fells them, as he did the others; so also he feels the bridge in the foreground, by its slenderness, to contradict the aspect of violence in the torrent; he thinks the torrent and avalanches should have it all their own way hereabouts; so he strikes down the nearer bridge, and restores the one farther off, where the force of the stream may be supposed less. Next, the bit of road on the right, above the bank, is not built on a wall, nor on arches high enough to give the idea of an Alpine road in general; so he makes the arches taller, and the bank steeper, introducing, as we shall see presently, a reminiscence from the upper part of the pass.

§ 15. I say he "*thinks*" this, and "introduces" that. But, strictly speaking, he does not think at all. If he thought, he would instantly go wrong; it is only the clumsy and uninventive artist who thinks. All these changes come into his head involuntarily; an entirely imperative dream, crying, "thus it must be," has taken possession of him; he can see, and do, no otherwise than as the dream directs.

This is especially to be remembered with respect to the next incident—the introduction of figures. Most persons to whom I have shown the drawing, and who feel its general character, regret that there is any living thing in it; they say it destroys the majesty of its desolation. But the dream said not so to Turner. The dream insisted particularly upon the great fact of its having come by the road. The torrent was wild, the stones were wonderful; but the most wonderful thing of all was how we ourselves, the dream and I, ever got there. By our feet we could not—by the clouds we could

not—by any ivory gates we could not—in no other wise could we have come than by the coach road. One of the great elements of sensation, all the day long, has been that extraordinary road, and its goings on, and gettings about; here, under avalanches of stones, and among insanities of torrents, and overhangings of precipices, much tormented and driven to all manner of makeshifts and coils to this side and the other, still the marvellous road persists in going on, and that so smoothly and safely, that it is not merely great diligences, going in a caravanish manner, with whole teams of horses, that can traverse it, but little postchaises with small postboys, and a pair of ponies. And the dream declared that the full essence and soul of the scene, and consummation of the wonderfulness of the torrents and Alps, lay in a postchaise, with small ponies and postboy, which accordingly it insisted upon Turner's inserting, whether he liked it or not, at the turn of the road.

§ 16. Now, it will be observed by any one familiar with ordinary principles of arrangement of form (on which principles I shall insist at length in another place), that while the dream introduces these changes bearing on the expression of the scene, it is also introducing other changes, which appear to be made more or less in compliance with received rules of composition,*

* I have just said, § 12, that if, *quitting hold* of this original impression, the artist tries to compose something prettier than he saw, it is all over with him; but, retaining the first impression, he will, nevertheless, if he has invention, instinctively modify many lines and parts of it—possibly all parts of it—for the better; sometimes making them individually more pictorial, sometimes preventing them from interfering with each other's beauty. For almost all natural landscapes are redundant treasures of more or less confused beauty, out of which the human instinct of invention can by just choice arrange, not a better treasure, but one more fitted to human sight and emotion, infinitely narrower, infinitely less lovely in detail, but having this great virtue, that there shall be absolutely nothing which does not contrib-

rendering the masses broader, the lines more continuous, and the curves more graceful. But the curious part of the business is, that these changes seem not so much to be wrought by imagining an entirely new condition of any feature, as by *remembering* something which will fit better in that place. For instance, Turner felt the bank on the right ought to be made more solid and rocky, in order to suggest firmer resistance to the stream, and he turns it, as will be seen by comparing the etchings, into a kind of rock buttress, to the wall, instead of a mere bank. Now, the buttress into which he turns it is very nearly a facsimile of one which he had drawn on that very St. Gothard road, far above, at the Devil's Bridge, at least thirty years before, and which he had himself etched and engraved, for the Liber Studiorum, although the plate was never published. Fig. 1 is a copy of the bit of the etching in question. Note how the wall winds over it, and observe especially the peculiar depression in the middle of its surface, and compare

ute to the effect of the whole ; whereas in the natural landscape there is a redundancy which impresses only *as* redundance, and often an occurrence of marring features ; not of ugliness only, but of ugliness in *the wrong place*. Ugliness has its proper virtue and use ; but ugliness occurring at the wrong time (as if the negro servant, instead of standing behind the king, in Tintoret's picture, were to thrust his head in front of the noble features of his master) is justly to be disliked and withdrawn.

"Why, this," exclaims the idealist, "is what *I* have always been saying, and *you* have always been denying." No ; I never denied this. But I denied that painters in general, when they spoke of improving Nature, knew what Nature was. Observe : before they dare as much as to *dream* of arranging her, they must be able to paint her as she is ; nor will the most skilful arrangement ever atone for the slightest wilful failure in truth of representation ; and I am continually declaiming against arrangement, not because arrangement is wrong, but because our present painters have for the most part nothing to arrange. They cannot so much as paint a weed or a post accurately ; and yet they pretend to improve the forests and mountains.

it in those parts generally with the features introduced in the later composition. Of course, this might be set down as a mere chance coincidence, but for the frequency of the cases in which Turner can be shown to have done the same thing, and to have introduced, after a lapse of many years, memories of something which, however apparently small or unimportant, had struck him in his earlier studies. These instances, when I can detect them, I shall point out as I go on engraving his works; and I think they are numerous enough to induce a doubt whether Turner's composition was not universally an arrangement of remembrances, summoned just as they were wanted, and set each in its fittest place. It is this very character which appears to me to mark it as so distinctly an act of dream-vision; for in a dream there is just this kind of confused remembrance of the forms of things which we have seen long ago, associated by new and strange laws. That common dreams are grotesque and disorderly, and Turner's dream natural and orderly, does not, to my thinking, involve any necessary difference in the real species of act of mind. I think I shall be able to show, in the course of the following pages, or elsewhere, that whenever Turner really tried to *compose*, and made modifications of his subjects on principle, he did wrong, and

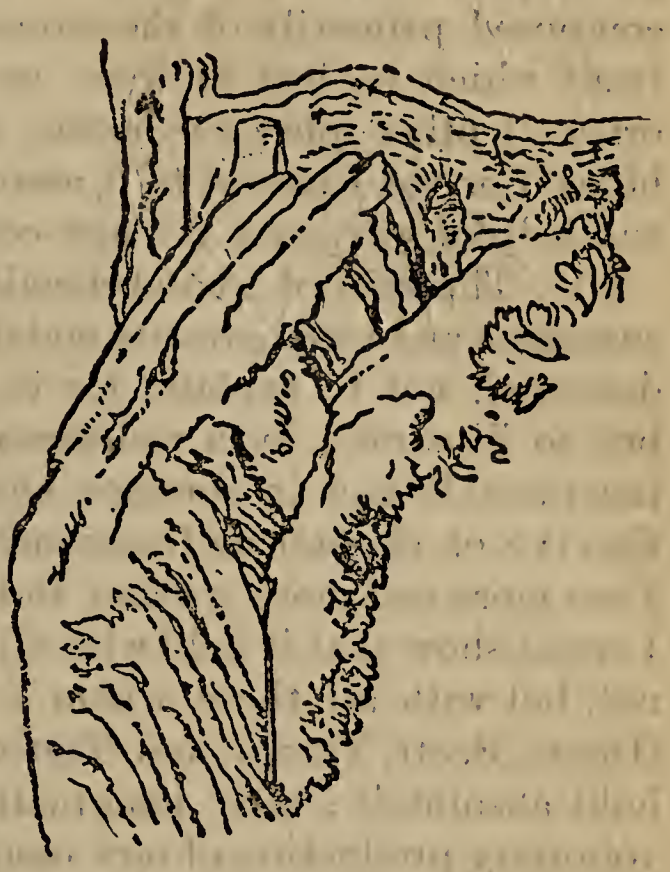


FIG. 1.

spoiled them; and that he only did right in a kind of passive obedience to his first vision, that vision being composed primarily of the strong memory of the place itself which he had to draw; and secondarily, of memories of other places (whether recognized as such by himself or not I cannot tell), associated, in a harmonious and helpful way, with the new central thought.

§ 17. The kind of mental chemistry by which the dream summons and associates its materials, I have already endeavored, not to explain, for it is utterly inexplicable, but to illustrate, by a well-ascertained though equally inexplicable fact in common chemistry. That illustration (§ 8 of chapter on Imaginative Association, Vol. II.) I see more and more ground to think correct. How far I could show that it held with all great inventors, I know not, but with all those whom I have carefully studied (Dante, Scott, Turner, and Tintoret) it seems to me to hold absolutely; their imagination consisting, not in a voluntary production of new images, but an involuntary remembrance, exactly at the right moment, of something they had actually seen.

Imagine all that any of these men had seen or heard in the whole course of their lives, laid up accurately in their memories as in vast storehouses, extending, with the poets, even to the slightest intonations of syllables heard in the beginning of their lives, and, with the painters, down to the minute folds of drapery, and shapes of leaves or stones; and over all this unindexed and immeasurable mass of treasure, the imagination brooding and wandering, but dream-gifted, so as to summon at any moment exactly such groups of ideas as shall justly fit each other: this I conceive to be the real nature of the imaginative mind, and this, I believe, it would be oftener explained to us as being, by the men themselves who possess it, but that they have no idea what the state of other persons' minds is in comparison; they suppose

PLATE XXIII.—TURNER'S LATEST "NOTTINGHAM."

every one remembers all that he has seen in the same way, and do not understand how it happens that they alone can produce good drawings or great thoughts.

§ 18. Whether this be the case with all inventors or not, it was assuredly the case with Turner to such an extent that he seems never to have lost, or cared to disturb, the impression made upon him by any scene,—even in his earliest youth. He never seems to have gone back to a place to look at it again, but, as he gained power, to have painted and repainted it as first seen, associating with it certain new thoughts or new knowledge, but never shaking the central pillar of the old image. Several instances of this have been already given in my pamphlet on Pre-Raphaelitism; others will be noted in the course of our investigation of his works; one, merely for the sake of illustration, I will give here.

§ 19. Plate 22 is an outline of a drawing of the town and castle of Nottingham, made by Turner for Walker's Itinerant, and engraved in that work. The engraving (from which this outline was made, as I could not discover the drawing itself) was published on the 28th of February, 1795, a period at which Turner was still working in a very childish way; and the whole design of this plate is curiously stiff and commonplace. Note, especially, the two formal little figures under the sail.

In the year 1833, an engraving of Nottingham, from a drawing by Turner, was published by Moon, Boys & Graves, in the England and Wales series. Turner certainly made none of the drawings for that series long before they were wanted; and if, therefore, we suppose the drawing to have been made so much as three years before the publication of the plate, it will be setting the date of it as far back as is in the slightest degree probable. We may assume therefore (and the conclusion is sufficiently established, also, by the style of the execution), that there was an interval of at least thirty-five years between

the making of those two drawings,—thirty-five years, in the course of which Turner had become, from an unpractised and feeble draughtsman, the most accomplished artist of his age, and had entirely changed his methods of work and his habits of feeling.

§ 20. On the page opposite to the etching of the first, I have given an etching of the last Nottingham. The one will be found to be merely the amplification and adornment of the other. *Every incident* is preserved; even the men employed about the log of wood are there, only now removed far away (beyond the lock on the right, between it and the town), and so lost in mist that, though made out by color in the drawing, they cannot be made clear in the outline etching. The canal bridge and even the stiff mast are both retained; only another boat is added, and the sail dropped upon the higher mast is hoisted on the lower one; and the castle, to get rid of its formality, is moved a little to the left, so as to hide one side. But, evidently, no new sketch has been made. The painter has returned affectionately to his boyish impression, and worked it out with his manly power.

§ 21. How far this manly power itself acted merely in the accumulation of memories, remains, as I said, a question undetermined; but at all events, Turner's mind is not more, in my estimation, distinguished above others by its demonstrably arranging and ruling faculties, than by its demonstrably retentive and submissive faculties; and the longer I investigate it, the more this tenderness of perception and grasp of memory seem to me the root of its greatness. So that I am more and more convinced of what I had to state respecting the imagination, now many years ago, viz., that its true force lies in its marvellous insight and foresight—that it is, instead of a false and deceptive faculty, exactly the most accurate and truth-telling faculty which the human mind possesses; and all

the more truth-telling, because, in *its* work, the vanity and individualism of the man himself are crushed, and he becomes a mere instrument or mirror, used by a higher power for the reflection to others of a truth which no effort of his could ever have ascertained; so that all mathematical, and arithmetical, and generally scientific truth, is, in comparison, truth of the husk and surface, hard and shallow; and only the imaginative truth is precious. Hence, whenever we want to know what are the chief facts of any case, it is better not to go to political economists, nor to mathematicians, but to the great poets; for I find they always see more of the matter than anyone else: and in like manner those who want to know the real facts of the world's outside aspect, will find that they cannot trust maps, nor charts, nor any manner of mensuration; the most important facts being always quite immeasurable, and that (with only some occasional and trifling inconvenience, if they form too definite anticipations as to the position of a bridge here, or a road there) the Turnerian topography is the only one to be trusted.

§ 22. One or two important corollaries may be drawn from these principles, respecting the kind of fidelity which is to be exacted from men who have no imaginative power. It has been stated, over and over again, that it is not *possible* to draw the whole of nature, as in a mirror. Certain omissions must be made, and certain conventionalities admitted, in all art. Now it ought to be the instinctive affection of each painter which guides him to the omissions he is to make, or signs he is to use; and his choice of this or the other fact for representation, his insistance upon this or the other character in his subject, as that which to him is impressive, constitutes, when it is earnest and simple, part of the value of his work. This is the only inspiration he is capable of, but it is a kind of inspiration still; and although he

may not have the memory or the associative power which would enable him to compose a subject in the Turnerian manner, he may have certain *affections*, perfectly expressible in his work, and of which he ought to allow the influence to be seen.*

§ 23. And this may especially be permitted in rapid sketching of effects or scenes which, either in their speedy passing away, or for want of time, it is impossible to draw faithfully. Generally, if leisure permit, the detailed drawing of the object will be grander than any "impression on the mind" of an unimaginative person; but if leisure do not permit, a rapid sketch, marking forcibly the points that strike him, may often have considerable interest in its way. The other day I sketched the towers of the Swiss Fribourg hastily from the Hôtel de Zahringen. It was a misty morning with broken sunshine, and the towers were seen by flickering light through broken clouds,—dark blue mist filling the hollow of the valley behind them. I have engraved the sketch on the opposite page, adding a few details, and exaggerating the exaggerations; for in drawing from nature, even at speed, I am not in the habit of exaggerating enough to illustrate what I mean. The next day, on a clear and calm forenoon, I daguerreotyped the towers, with the result given on the next plate (25 Fig. 2); and this unexaggerated statement, with its details properly painted, would not only be the more right, but infinitely the grander of the two. But the first sketch nevertheless conveys, in some respects, a truer idea of Fribourg than any other, and has, therefore, a certain

* For instance, even in my topographical etching, Plate 20, I have given only a few lines of the thousands which existed in the scene. Those lines are what I considered the leading ones. Another person might have thought other lines the leading ones, and his representation might be equally true as far as it went; but which of our representations went furthest would depend on our relative degrees of knowledge and feeling about hills.

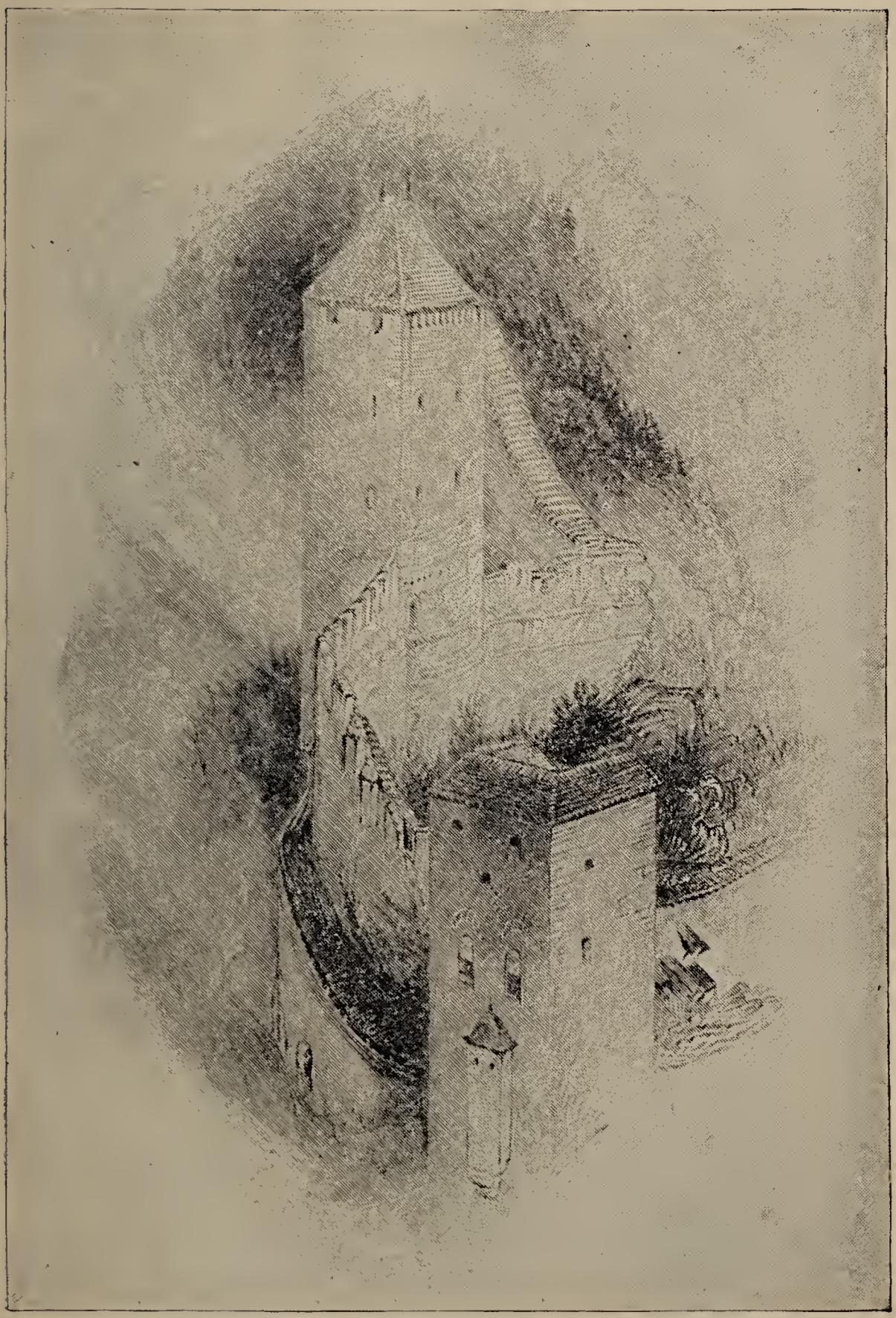


PLATE XXIV.—THE TOWERS OF FRIBOURG.

use. For instance, the wall going up behind the main tower is seen in my drawing to bend very distinctly, following the different slopes of the hill. In the daguerreotype this bend is hardly perceptible. And yet the notablest thing in the town of Fribourg is, that all its walls have got flexible spines, and creep up and down the precipices more in the manner of cats than walls; and there is a general sense of height, strength, and grace about its belts of tower and rampart, which clings even to every separate and less graceful piece of them when seen on the spot; so that the hasty sketch, expressing this, has a certain veracity wanting altogether in the daguerreotype.

Nay, sometimes, even in the most accurate and finished topography, a slight exaggeration may be permitted; for many of the most important facts in nature are so subtle, that they *must* be slightly exaggerated, in order to be made noticeable when they are translated into the comparatively clumsy lines of even the best drawing,* and removed from the associating circumstances which enhanced their influence, or directed attention to them, in nature.

§ 24. Still, in all these cases, the more unconscious the draughtsman is of the changes he is making, the better. Love will then do its own proper work; and the only true test of good or bad is, ultimately, strength of affection. For it does not matter with what wise purposes, or on what wise principles, the thing is drawn; if it be not drawn for love of it, it will never be right; and if it *be* drawn for love of it, it will never be wrong—love's misrepresentation being truer than the most mathematical presentation. And although all the reasonings about right and wrong, through which we have been led

* Or the best photograph. The question of the exact relation of value between photography and good topographical drawing, I hope to examine in another place.

in this chapter, could never be brought to bear on the work at the moment of doing it, yet this test of right holds always;—if the artist is in anywise modifying or methodizing to exhibit himself and his dexterity, his work will, in that precise degree, be abortive; and if he is working with hearty love of the place, earnest desire to be faithful to it, and yet an open heart for every fancy that Heaven sends him, in that precise degree his work will be great and good.

CHAPTER III.

OF TURNERIAN LIGHT.

§ 1. HAVING in the preceding chapter seen the grounds on which to explain and justify Turner's *choice* of facts, we proceed to examine finally those modes of *representing* them introduced by him;—modes so utterly at variance with the received doctrines on the subject of art, as to cause his works to be regarded with contempt, or severe blame, by all reputed judges, at the period of their first appearance. And, chiefly, I must confirm and farther illustrate the general statements made respecting light and shade in the chapters on Truth of Tone,* and on Infinity,† deduced from the great fact (§ 5 chapter on Truth of Tone) that "nature surpasses us in power of obtaining light as much as the sun surpasses white paper." I found that this part of the book was not well understood, because people in general have no idea how much the sun *does* surpass white paper. In order to know this practically, let the reader take a piece of pure white drawing-paper, and place it in the position in which a drawing is usually seen. This is, properly, upright (all drawings being supposed to be made on vertical planes), as a picture is seen on a room wall. Also, the usual place in which paintings or drawings are seen is at some distance from a window, with a gentle side light falling upon them, front lights being unfavorable to nearly all drawing. Therefore the highest light

* Part II. Sec. II. Chap. I. † Part III. Sec. I. Chap. V.

an artist can ordinarily command for his work is that of white paint, or paper, under a gentle side light.* But if we wished to get as much light as possible, and to place the artist under the most favorable circumstances, we should take the drawing near the window. Put therefore your white paper upright, and take it to the window. Let *a c*, *c d*, be two sides of your room, with a window at *b b*. Under ordinary circumstances your picture would be hung at *e*, or in some such position on the wall *c d*. First, therefore, put your paper upright at *e*, and then bring it gradually to the window, in the successive positions *f*, *g*, and (opening the window) finally at *p*. You will notice that as you come nearer the window the light gradually *increases* on the paper; so that in the position at *p* it is far better lighted than it was at *e*. If, however, the sun actually falls upon it at *p*, the experiment is unfair, for the picture is not meant to be seen in sunshine, and your object is to compare pure white paper, as ordinarily used, *with* sunshine. So either take a time when the sun does not shine at all, or does not shine in the window where the experiment is to be tried; or else keep the paper so far within the window that the sun may not touch it. Then the experiment is perfectly fair, and you will find that you have the paper at *p* in full, serene, pictorial light, of the best kind, and highest attainable power.

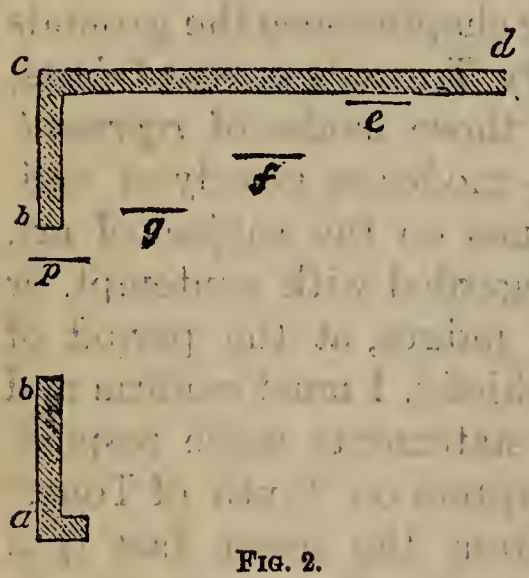


FIG. 2.

§ 2. Now, leaning a little over the window sill, bring the edge of the paper at *p* against the sky, rather low

* Light from above is the same thing with reference to our present inquiry.

down on the horizon (I suppose you choose a fine day for the experiment, that the sun is high, and the sky clear blue, down to the horizon). The moment you bring your white paper against the sky you will be startled to find this bright white paper suddenly appear in shade. You will draw it back, thinking you have changed its position. But no; the paper is not in shade. It is as bright as ever it was; brighter than under ordinary circumstances it ever can be. But, behold, the blue sky of the horizon is far brighter. The one is indeed blue, and the other white, but the *white* is *darkest*,* and by a great deal. And you will, though perhaps not for the first time in your life, perceive that though black is not easily proved to be white, white, may, under certain circumstances, be very nearly proved black, or at all events brown.

§ 3. When this fact is first shown to them, the general feeling with most people is, that, by being brought against the sky, the white paper is somehow or other brought "into shade." But this is not so; the paper remains exactly as it was; it is only compared with an actually brighter hue, and looks darker by comparison. The circumstances are precisely like those which affect our sensations of heat and cold. If, when by chance we have one hand warm, and another cold, we feel, with each hand, water warmed to an intermediate degree, we shall first declare the water to be cold, and then to be warm; but the water has a definite heat wholly independent of our sensations, and accurately ascertainable by a thermometer. So it is with light and shade. Looking from the bright sky to the white paper, we affirm the white paper to be "in shade,"—that is, it produces on us a sensation of darkness, by comparison.

* For which reason, I said in the Appendix to the third volume, that the expression "finite realization of infinity" was a considerably less rational one than "black realization of white."

But the hue of the paper, and that of the sky, are just as fixed as temperatures are; and the sky is actually a brighter thing than white paper, by a certain number of degrees of light, scientifically determinable. In the same way, every other color, or force of color, is a fixed thing, not dependent on sensation, but numerically representable with as much exactitude as a degree of heat by a thermometer. And of these hues, that of open sky is one not producible by human art. The sky is not blue *color* merely,—it is blue *fire*, and cannot be painted.

§ 4. Next, observe, this blue fire has in it *white* fire; that is, it has white clouds, as much brighter than itself as *it* is brighter than the white paper. So, then, above this azure light, we have another equally exalted step of white light. Supposing the value of the light of the pure white paper represented by the number 10, then that of the blue sky will be (approximately) about 20, and of the white clouds 30.

But look at the white clouds carefully, and it will be seen they are not all of the same white; parts of them are quite gray compared with other parts, and they are as full of passages of light and shade as if they were of solid earth. Nevertheless, their most deeply shaded part is that already so much lighter than the blue sky, which has brought us up to our number 30, and all these high lights of white are some 10 degrees above that, or, to white paper, as 40 to 10. And now if you look from the blue sky and white clouds towards the sun, you will find that this cloud white, which is four times as white as white paper, is quite dark and lightless compared with those silver clouds that burn nearer the sun itself, which you cannot gaze upon,—an infinite of brightness. How will you estimate that?

And yet to express all this, we have but our poor white paper after all. We must not talk too proudly of

our "truths" of art; I am afraid we shall have to let a good deal of black fallacy into it, at the best.

§ 5. Well, of the sun, and of the silver clouds, we will not talk for the present. But this principal fact we have learned by our experiment with the white paper, that, taken all in all, the calm sky, with such light and shade as are in it, is brighter than the earth; brighter than the whitest thing on earth which has not, at the moment of comparison, heaven's own direct light on it. Which fact it is generally one of the first objects of noble painters to render. I have already marked one part of their aim in doing so, namely, the expression of infinity; but the opposing of heavenly light to earth-darkness is another most important one; and of all ways of rendering a picture generally impressive (see especially § 12 of the chapter just referred to), this is the simplest and surest. Make the sky calm and luminous, and raise against it dark trees, mountains, or towers, or any other substantial and terrestrial thing, in bold outline, and the mind accepts the assertion of this great and solemn truth with thankfulness.

§ 6. But this may be done either nobly or basely, as any other solemn truth may be asserted. It may be spoken with true feeling of all that it means; or it may be declared, as a Turk declares that "God is great," when he means only that he himself is lazy. The "heaven is bright," of many vulgar painters, has precisely the same amount of signification; it means that they know nothing—will do nothing—are without thought—without care—without passion. They will not walk the earth, not watch the ways of it, nor gather the flowers of it. They will sit in the shade, and only assert that very perceptible, long-ascertained fact, "heaven is bright." And as it may be *asserted* basely, so it may be *accepted* basely. Many of our capacities for receiving noblest emotion are abused, in mere idleness, for pleas-

ure's sake, and people take the excitement of a solemn sensation as they do that of a strong drink. Thus the abandoned court of Louis XIV. had on fast days its sacred concerts, doubtless entering in some degree into the religious expression of the music, and thus idle and frivolous women at the present day will weep at an oratorio. So the sublimest effects of landscape may be sought through mere indolence; and even those who are not ignorant, or dull, judge often erroneously of such effects of art, because their very openness to all pleasant and sacred association instantly colors whatever they see, so that, give them but the feeblest shadow of a thing they love, they are instantly touched by it to the heart, and mistake their own pleasurable feeling for the result of the painter's power. Thus when, by spotting and splashing, such a painter as Constable reminds them somewhat of wet grass and green leaves, forthwith they fancy themselves in all the happiness of a meadow walk; and when Gaspar Poussin throws out his yellow horizon with black hills, forthwith they are touched as by the solemnity of a real Italian twilight, altogether forgetting that wet grass and twilight do not constitute the universe; and prevented by their joy at being pleasantly cool, or gravely warm, from seeking any of those more precious truths which cannot be caught by momentary sensation, but must be thoughtfully pursued.

§ 7. I say "more precious," for the simple fact that the sky is brighter than the earth is *not* a precious truth unless the earth itself be first understood. Despise the earth, or slander it; fix your eyes on its gloom, and forget its loveliness; and we do not thank you for your languid or despairing perception of brightness in heaven. But rise up actively on the earth,—learn what there is in it, know its color and form, and the full measure and make of it, and if *after that* you can say "heaven is bright,"

it will be a precious truth, but not till then. Giovanni Bellini knows the earth well, paints it to the full, and to the smallest fig-leaf and falling flower,—blue hill and white-walled city,—glittering robe and golden hair; to each he will give its lustre and loveliness; and then, so far as with his poor human lips he may declare it, far beyond all these, he proclaims that "heaven is bright." But Gaspar, and such other landscapists, painting all Nature's flowery ground as one barrenness, and all her fair foliage as one blackness, and all her exquisite forms as one bluntness; when, in this sluggard gloom and sullen treachery of heart, they mutter their miserable attestation to what others had long ago discerned for them,—the sky's brightness,—we do not thank them; or thank them only in so far as, even in uttering this last remnant of truth, they are more commendable than those who have sunk from apathy to atheism, and declare, in their dark and hopeless backgrounds, that heaven is NOT bright.

§ 8. Let us next ascertain what are the colors of the earth itself.

A mountain five or six miles off, in a sunny summer morning in Switzerland, will commonly present itself in some such pitch of dark force, as related to the sky, as that shown in Fig. 4, Plate 25, while the sky itself will still, if there are white clouds in in, tell as a clear dark, throwing out those white clouds in vigorous relief of light; yet, conduct the experiment of the white paper as already described, and you will, in all probability, find that the darkest part of the mountain—its most vigorous nook of almost black-looking shadow—is *whiter than the paper*.

The figure given represents the *apparent* color * of the

* The *color*, but not the form. I wanted the contour of the top of the Breven for reference in another place, and have therefore given it instead of that of the Bouchard, but in the proper depth of tint.

top of the Aiguille Bouchard (the mountain which is seen from the village of Chamouni, on the other side of the Glacier des Bois), distant, by Forbes's map, a furlong or two less than four miles in a direct line from the point of observation. The observation was made on a warm sunny morning, about eleven o'clock, the sky clear blue; the mountain seen against it, its shadows gray purple, and its sunlit parts greenish. Then the darkest part of the mountain was *lighter than pure white paper*, held upright in full light at the window, parallel to the direction in which the light entered. And it will thus generally be found impossible to represent, in any of its *true* colors, scenery distant more than two or three miles in full daylight. The deepest shadows are whiter than white paper.

§ 9. As, however, we pass to nearer objects, true representation gradually becomes possible;—to what degree is always of course ascertainable accurately by the same mode of experiment. Bring the edge of the paper against the thing to be drawn, and on that edge—as precisely as a lady would match the colors of two pieces of a dress—match the color of the landscape (with a little opaque white mixed in the tints you use, so as to render it easy to lighten or darken them). Take care not to imitate the tint as you believe it to be, but accurately as it is; so that the colored edge of the paper shall not be discernible from the color of the landscape. You will then find (if before inexperienced) that shadows of trees, which you thought were dark green or black, are pale violets and purples; that lights, which you thought were green, are intensely yellow, brown, or golden, and most of them far too bright to be matched at all. When you have got all the imitable hues truly matched, sketch the masses of the landscape out completely in those true and ascertained colors; and you will find, to your amazement, that you have painted it in the colors of Turner,—in those

very colors which perhaps you have been laughing at all your life,—the fact being that he, and he alone, of all men, *ever painted Nature in her own colors.*

§ 10. "Well, but," you will answer, impatiently, "how is it, if they are the true colors, that they look so unnatural?"

Because they are not shown in true contrast to the sky, and to other high lights. Nature paints her shadows in pale purple, and then raises her lights of heaven and sunshine to such height that the pale purple becomes, by comparison, a vigorous dark. But poor Turner has no sun at his command to oppose his pale colors. He follows Nature submissively as far as he can; puts pale purple where she does, bright gold where she does; and then when, on the summit of the slope of light, she opens her wings and quits the earth altogether, burning into ineffable sunshine, what can he do but sit helpless, stretching his hands toward her in calm consent, as she leaves him and mocks at him!

§ 11. "Well," but you will farther ask, "is this right or wise? ought not the contrast between the masses be given, rather than the actual hues of a few parts of them, when the others are inimitable?"

Yes, if this *were* possible, it ought to be done; but the true contrasts can NEVER be given. The whole question is simply whether you will be false at one side of the scale or at the other,—that is, whether you will lose yourself in light or in darkness. This necessity is easily expressible in numbers. Suppose the utmost light you wish to imitate is that of serene, feebly lighted clouds in ordinary sky (not sun or stars, which it is, of course, impossible deceptively to imitate in painting by any artifice). Then, suppose the degrees of shadow between those clouds and Nature's utmost darkness accurately measured, and divided into a hundred degrees (darkness being zero). Next we measure our own scale, calling our

utmost possible black, zero; * and we shall be able to keep parallel with Nature, perhaps up to as far as her 40 degrees; all above that being whiter than our white paper. Well, with our power of contrast between zero and 40, we have to imitate her contrasts between zero and 100. Now, if we want true contrasts, we can first set our 40 to represent her 100, our 20 for her 80, and our zero for her 60; everything below her 60 being lost in blackness. This is, with certain modifications, Rembrandt's system. Or, secondly, we can put zero for her zero, 20 for her 20, and 40 for her 40; everything above 40 being lost in *white*ness. This is, with certain modifications, Paul Veronese's system. Or, finally, we can put our zero for her zero, and our 40 for her 100; our 20 for her 50, our 30 for her 75, and our 10 for her 25, proportioning the intermediate contrasts accordingly. This is, with certain modifications, Turner's system; † the modifications, in each case, being the adoption, to a certain extent, of either of the other systems. Thus, Turner inclines to Paul Veronese; liking, as far as possible, to get his hues perfectly true up to a certain point,—that is to say, to let his zero stand for Nature's zero, and his 10 for her 10, and his 20 for her 20, and then to expand towards the light by quick but cunning steps, putting 27 for 50, 30 for 70, and reserving some force still for the last 90 to 100. So Rembrandt modifies his system on the other side, putting his 40 for 100, his 30 for 90, his 20 for 80; then going subtly downwards 10 for 50, 5 for 30; nearly everything between 30 and zero being lost in gloom, yet so as still to reserve his zero for

* Even here we shall be defeated by Nature, her utmost darkness being deeper than ours. See Part II. Sec. II. Chap. I. § 4–7, etc.

† When the clouds are brilliantly lighted, it may rather be, as stated in § 4 above, in the proportion of 160 to 40. I take the number 100 as more calculable.

zero. The systems expressed in tabular form will stand thus:—

Nature.	Rembrandt.	Turner.	Veronese.
0	0	0	0
10	1	10	10
20	3	20	20
30	5	24	30
40	7	26	32
50	10	27	34
60	13	28	36
70	17	30	37
80	20	32	38
90	30	36	39
100	40	40	40

§ 12. Now it is evident that in Rembrandt's system, while the *contrasts* are not more right than with Veronese, the *colors* are all wrong, from beginning to end. With Turner and Veronese, Nature's 10 is their 10, and Nature's 20 their 20; enabling them to give pure truth up to a certain point. But with Rembrandt *not one color* is absolutely true, from one side of the scale to the other; only the contrasts are true at the top of the scale. Of course, this supposes Rembrandt's system applied to a subject which shall try it to the utmost, such as landscape. Rembrandt generally chose subjects in which the real colors were very nearly imitable,—as single heads with dark backgrounds, in which Nature's highest light was little above his own; her 40 being then truly representable by his 40, his picture became nearly an absolute truth. But his system is only right when applied to such subjects: clearly, when we have the full scale of natural light to deal with, Turner's and Veronese's convey the greatest sum of truth. But not the most complete deception, for people are so much more easily and instinctively impressed by force of light than truth of color, that they instantly miss the relative power of the sky, and the upper tones; and all the true local coloring

looks strange to them, separated from its adjuncts of high light; whereas, give them the true contrast of light, and they will not observe the false local color. Thus all Gaspar Poussin's and Salvator's pictures, and all effects obtained by leaving high lights in the midst of exaggerated darkness, catch the eye, and are received for true, while the pure truth of Veronese and Turner is rejected as unnatural; only not so much in Veronese's case as in Turner's, because Veronese confines himself to more imitable things, as draperies, figures, and architecture, in which his exquisite truth at the bottom of the scale tells on the eye at once; but Turner works a good deal also (see the table) at the *top* of the natural scale, dealing with effects of sunlight and other phases of the upper colors, more or less inimitable, and betraying therefore, more or less, the artifices used to express them. It will be observed, also, that in order to reserve some force for the top of his scale, Turner is obliged to miss his gradations chiefly in middle tints (see the table), where the feebleness is sure to be felt. His principal point for missing the midmost gradations is almost always between the earth and sky; he draws the earth truly as far as he can, to the horizon; then the sky as far as he can, with his 30 to 40 part of the scale. They run together at the horizon; and the spectator complains that there is no distinction between earth and sky, or that the earth does not *look solid enough.*

§ 13. In the upper portions of the three pillars, 5, 6, 7, Plate 25, are typically represented these three conditions of light and shade, characteristic, 5, of Rembrandt, 6, of Turner, and 7, of Veronese. The pillar to be drawn is supposed, in all the three cases, white; Rembrandt represents it as white on its highest light; and, getting the true gradations between this highest light and extreme dark, is reduced to his zero, or black, for the dark side of the white object. This first pillar also represents the

system of Leonardo da Vinci. In the room of the Louvre appropriated to Italian drawings is a study of a piece of drapery by Leonardo. Its lights are touched with the finest white chalk, and its shadows wrought, through exquisite gradations, to utter blackness. The pillar 6 is drawn on the system of Turner; the high point of light is still distinct: but even the darkest part of the shaft is kept pale, and the gradations which give the roundness are wrought out with the utmost possible delicacy. The third shaft is drawn on Veronese's system. The light, though still focused, is more diffused than with Turner; and a slight flatness results from the determination that the fact of the shaft's being *white* shall be discerned more clearly even than that it is round; and that its darkest part shall still be capable of brilliant relief, as a white mass, from other objects round it.

§ 14. This resolution, on Veronese's part, is owing to the profound respect for the *colors* of objects which necessarily influenced him, as the colorist at once the most brilliant and the most tender of all painters of the elder schools; and it is necessary for us briefly to note the way in which this greater or less respect for local color influences the system of the three painters in light and shade.

Take the whitest piece of note-paper you can find, put a blot of ink upon it, carry it into the sunshine, and hold it fully fronting the sunshine, so as to make the paper look as dazzling as possible, but not to let the wet blot of ink *shine*. You will then find the ink look *intensely* black,—blacker, in fact, than anywhere else, owing to its vigorous contrast with the dazzling paper.

Remove the paper from the sunshine. The ink will not look so black. Carry the paper gradually into the darkest part of the room, and the contrast will as gradually appear to diminish; and, of course, in darkness, the distinction between the black and the white vanishes. Wet

ink is as perfect a representative as is by any means attainable of a perfectly dark color; that is, of one which absorbs all the light that falls on it; and the nature of such a color is best understood by considering it as a piece of portable night. Now, of course, the higher you raise the daylight about this bit of night, the more vigorous is the contrast between the two. And, therefore, as a general rule, the higher you raise the light on any object with a pattern or stain upon it, the more distinctly that pattern or stain is seen. But observe: the distinction between the full black of ink, and full white of paper, is the utmost reach of light and dark possible to art. Therefore, if this contrast is to be represented truly, no deeper black can ever be given in any shadow than that offered at once, as local color, in a full black pattern, on the highest light. And, where color is the principal object of the picture, that color must, at all events, be as right as possible *where it is best seen*, i.e., in the lights. Hence the principle of Paul Veronese, and of all the great Venetian colorists, is to use full black for full black in high light, letting the shadow shift for itself as best it may; and sometimes even putting the local black a little darker in light than shadow, in order to give the more vigorous contrast noted above. Let the pillars in Plate 25 be supposed to have a black mosaic pattern on the lower part of their shafts. Paul Veronese's general practice will be, as at 7, having marked the rounding of the shaft as well as he can in the white parts, to paint the pattern with one even black over all, reinforcing it, if at all, a little in the *light*.

§ 15. Repeat the experiment on the note-paper with a red spot of carmine instead of ink. You will now find that the contrast in the sunshine appears about the same as in the shade—the red and white rising and falling together, and dying away together into the darkness. The fact, however, is, that the contrast does actually for

some time increase towards the light; for in utter darkness the distinction is not visible—the red cannot be distinguished from the white; admit a little light, and the contrast is feebly discernible; admit more, it is distinctly discernible. But you cannot increase the contrast beyond a certain point. From that point the red and white for some time rise very nearly equally in light, or fall together very nearly equally in shade; but the contrast will begin to *diminish* in very high lights, for strong sunlight has a tendency to exhibit particles of dust, or any sparkling texture in the local color, and then to diminish its power; so that in order to see local color well, a certain degree of shadow is necessary: for instance, a very delicate complexion is not well seen in the sun; and the veins of a marble pillar, or the colors of a picture, can only be properly seen in comparative shade.

§ 16. I will not entangle the reader in the very subtle and curious variations of the laws in this matter. The simple fact which is *necessary* for him to observe is, that the paler and purer the color, the more the great Venetian colorists will reinforce it in the shadow, and allow it to fall or rise in sympathy with the light; and those especially whose object it is to represent sunshine, nearly always reinforce their local colors somewhat in the shadows, and keep them both fainter and feebler in the light, so that they thus approach a condition of universal glow, the full color being used for the shadow, and a delicate and somewhat subdued hue of it for the light. And this to the eye is the loveliest possible condition of color. Perhaps few people have ever asked themselves why they admire a rose so much more than all other flowers. If they consider, they will find, first, that red is, in a delicately gradated state, the loveliest of all pure colors; and secondly, that in the rose there is *no shadow*, except what is composed of color.

All its shadows are fuller in color than its lights, owing to the translucency and reflective power of its leaves.

The second shaft, 6, in which the local color is paler towards the light, and reinforced in the shadow, will therefore represent the Venetian system with respect to paler colors, and the system, for the most part, even with respect to darker colors, of painters who attempt to render effects of strong sunlight. Generally, therefore, it represents the practice of Turner. The first shaft, 5, exhibits the disadvantage of the practice of Rembrandt and Leonardo, in that they cannot show the local color on the dark side, since, however energetic, it must at last sink into their exaggerated darkness.

§ 17. Now, from all the preceding inquiry, the reader must perceive more and more distinctly the great truth, that all forms of right art consist in a certain *choice* made between various classes of truths, a few only being represented, and others necessarily excluded; and that the excellence of each style depends first on its consistency with itself,—the perfect fidelity, as far as possible, to the truths it has chosen; and secondly, on the breadth of its harmony, or number of truths it has been able to reconcile, and the consciousness with which the truths refused are acknowledged, even though they may not be represented. A great artist is just like a wise and hospitable man with a small house: the large companies of truths, like guests, are waiting his invitation; he wisely chooses from among this crowd the guests who will be happiest with each other, making those whom he receives thoroughly comfortable, and kindly remembering even those whom he excludes; while the foolish host, trying to receive all, leaves a large part of his company on the staircase, without even knowing who is there, and destroys, by

inconsistent fellowship, the pleasure of those who gain entrance.

§ 18. But even those hosts who choose well will be farther distinguished from each other by their choice of nobler or inferior companies; and we find the greatest artists mainly divided into two groups,—those who paint principally with respect to local color, headed by Paul Veronese, Titian, and Turner; and those who paint principally with reference to light and shade irrespective of color, headed by Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt, and Raphael. The noblest members of each of these classes introduce the element proper to the other class, in a subordinate way. Paul Veronese introduces a subordinate light and shade, and Leonardo introduces a subordinate local color. The main difference is, that with Leonardo, Rembrandt, and Raphael, vast masses of the picture are lost in comparatively colorless (dark, gray, or brown) shadow; these painters *beginning* with the *lights*, and going *down* to blackness; but with Veronese, Titian, and Turner, the whole picture is like the rose,—glowing with color in the shadows, and rising into paler and more delicate hues, or masses of whiteness, in the lights; they having *begun* with the *shadows*, and gone up *to* whiteness.

§ 19. The colorists have in this respect one disadvantage, and three advantages. The disadvantage is, that between their less violent hues, it is not possible to draw all the forms which can be represented by the exaggerated shadow of the chiaroscurists, and therefore a slight tendency to flatness is always characteristic of the greater colorists, as opposed to Leonardo or Rembrandt. When the form of some single object is to be given, and its subtleties are to be rendered to the utmost, the Leonardesque manner of drawing is often very noble. It is generally adopted by Albert Durer in his engravings, and is very useful, when em-

ployed by a thorough master, in many kinds of engraving;* but it is an utterly false method of *study*, as we shall see presently.

§ 20. Of the three advantages possessed by the colorists over the chiaroscurists, the first is, that they have in the greater portions of their pictures *absolute* truth, as shown above, § 12, while the chiaroscurists have no absolute truth anywhere. With the colorists the shadows are right; the lights untrue: but with the chiaroscurists lights and shadows are both untrue. The second advantage is, that also the *relations* of color are broader and vaster with the colorists than the chiaroscurists. Take, for example, that piece of drapery studied by Leonardo, in the Louvre, with white lights and black shadows. Ask yourself, first, whether the real drapery was black or white. If white, then its high lights are rightly white; but its folds being black, it could not *as a mass* be distinguished from the black or dark objects in its neighborhood. But the fact is, that a white cloth or handkerchief always *is* distinguished in daylight, as a *whole white thing*, from all that is colored about it: we see at once that there is a white piece of stuff, and a red, or green, or gray one near it, as the case may be: and

* It is often extremely difficult to distinguish properly between the Leonardesque manner, in which local color is denied altogether, and the Turneresque, in which local color at its highest point in the picture is merged in whiteness. Thus, Albert Durer's noble "Melancholia" is entirely Leonardesque; the leaves on her head, her flesh, her wings, her dress, the wolf, the wooden ball, and the rainbow, being all equally white on the high lights. But my drawing of leaves, facing page 160, Vol. III., is Turneresque; because, though I leave pure white to represent the pale green of leaves and grass in high light, I give definite increase of darkness to four of the bramble leaves, which, in reality, were purple, and leave a dark withered stalk nearly black, though it is in light, where it crosses the leaf in the centre. These distinctions could only be properly explained by a lengthy series of examples; which I hope to give some day or other, but have not space for here.

this relation of the white object to other objects *not* white, Leonardo has wholly deprived himself of the power of expressing; while, if the cloth were black or dark, much more has he erred by making its lights white. In either case, he has missed the large relation of mass to mass, for the sake of the small one of fold to fold. And this is more or less the case with all chiaroscurists; with all painters, that is to say, who endeavor in their studies of objects to get rid of the idea of color, and give the abstract shade. They invariably exaggerate the shadows, not with respect to the thing itself, but with respect to all around it; and they exaggerate the lights also, by leaving pure white for the high light of what in reality is gray, rose-colored, or, in some way, not white.

§ 21. This method of study, being peculiarly characteristic of the Roman and Florentine schools, and associated with very accurate knowledge of form and expression, has gradually got to be thought by a large body of artists the *grand* way of study; an idea which has been fostered all the more because it was an unnatural way, and therefore thought to be a philosophical one. Almost the first idea of a child, or of a simple person looking at anything is, that it is a red, or a black, or a green, or a white thing. Nay, say the artists; that is an unphilosophical and barbarous view of the matter. Red and white are mere vulgar appearances; look farther into the matter, and you will see such and such wonderful other appearances. Abstract those, *they* are the heroic, epic, historic, and generally eligible appearances. And acting on this grand principle, they draw flesh white, leaves white, ground white, everything white in the light, and everything black in the shade—and think themselves wise. But, the longer I live, the more ground I see to hold in high honor a certain sort of childishness or innocent susceptibility. Generally

speaking, I find that when we first look at a subject, we get a glimpse of some of the greatest truths about it: as we look longer, our vanity, and false reasoning, and half-knowledge, lead us into various wrong opinions; but as we look longer still, we gradually return to our first impressions, only with a full understanding of their mystical and innermost reasons; and of much beyond and beside them, not then known to us, now added (partly as a foundation, partly as a corollary) to what at first we felt or saw. It is thus eminently in this matter of color. Lay your hand over the page of this book,—any child or simple person looking at the hand and book, would perceive, as the main fact of the matter, that a brownish pink thing was laid over a white one. The grand artist comes and tells you that your hand is not pink, and your paper is not white. He shades your fingers and shades your book, and makes you see all manner of starting veins, and projecting muscles, and black hollows, where before you saw nothing but paper and fingers. But go a little farther, and you will get more innocent again; you will find that, when "science has done its worst, two and two still make four;" and that the main and most important facts about your hand, so seen, are, after all, that it has four fingers and a thumb—showing as brownish pink things on white paper.

§ 22. I have also been more and more convinced, the more I think of it, that in general *pride is at the bottom of all great mistakes.* All the other passions do occasional good, but whenever pride puts in *its* word, everything goes wrong, and what it might really be desirable to do, quietly and innocently, it is mortally dangerous to do, proudly. Thus, while it is very often good for the artist to make *studies* of things, for the sake of knowing their forms, with their high lights all white, the moment he does this in a haughty way, and thinks himself drawing

in the great style, because he leaves high lights white, it is all over with him; and half the degradation of art in modern times has been owing to endeavors, much fostered by the metaphysical Germans, to see things without color, as if color were a vulgar thing; the result being, in most students, that they end by not being able to see anything at all; whereas the true and perfect way of studying any object is simply to look what its color is in high light, and put that safely down, if possible; or, if you are making a chiaroscuro study, to take the gray answering to that color, and cover the *whole* object at once with that gray, firmly resolving that no part of it shall be brighter than that; then look for the darkest part of it, and if, as is probable, its darkest part be still a great deal lighter than black, or than other things about it, assume a given shade, as dark as, with due reference to other things, you can have it, but no darker. Mark that for your extreme dark on the object, and between those limits get as much drawing as you can, by subtlety of gradation. That will tax your powers of drawing indeed; and you will find this, which seems a childish and simple way of going to work, requires verily a thousand-fold more power to carry out than all the pseudo-scientific abstractions that ever were invented.

§ 23. Nor can it long be doubted that it is also the most impressive way to others; for the third great advantage possessed by the colorists is, that the delightfulness of their picture, its sacredness, and general nobleness, are increased exactly in proportion to the quantity of light and of lovely color they can introduce in *the shadows*, as opposed to the black and gray of the chiaroscurists. I have already, in the Stones of Venice, vol. ii. chap. v., insisted upon the fact of the sacredness of color, and its necessary connection with all pure and noble feeling. What we have seen of the use of color by the poets will

help to confirm this truth; but perhaps I have not yet enough insisted on the simplest and readiest to hand of all proofs,—the way, namely, in which God has employed color in His creation as the unvarying accompaniment of all that is purest, most innocent, and most precious, while for things precious only in material uses, or dangerous, common colors are reserved. Consider for a little while what sort of a world it would be if all flowers were gray, all leaves black, and the sky *brown*. Imagine that, as completely as may be, and consider whether you would think the world any whit more sacred for being thus transfigured into the hues of the shadows in Raphael's Transfiguration. Then observe how constantly innocent things are bright in color; look at a dove's neck, and compare it with the gray back of a viper; I have often heard talk of brilliantly colored serpents; and I suppose there are such,—as there are gay poisons, like the foxglove and kalmia—types of deceit; but all the venomous serpents I have really *seen* are gray, brick-red, or brown, variously mottled; and the most awful serpent I have seen, the Egyptian asp, is precisely of the color of gravel, or only a little grayer. So, again, the crocodile and alligator are gray, but the innocent lizard green and beautiful. I do not mean that the rule is invariable, otherwise it would be more convincing than the lessons of the natural universe are intended ever to be; there are beautiful colors on the leopard and tiger, and in the berries of the nightshade; and there is nothing very notable in brilliancy of color either in sheep or cattle (though, by the way, the velvet of a brown bull's hide in the sun, or the tawny white of the Italian oxen, is, to my mind, lovelier than any leopard's or tiger's skin): but take a wider view of nature, and compare generally rainbows, sunrises, roses, violets, butterflies, birds, goldfish, rubies, opals, and corals, with alligators, hippopotami, lions, wolves, bears, swine, sharks, slugs, bones,

fungi,* fogs, and corrupting, stinging, destroying things in general, and you will feel then how the question stands between the colorists and chiaroscurists,—which of them have nature and life on their side, and which have sin and death.

§ 24. Finally: the ascertainment of the sanctity of color is not left to human sagacity. It is distinctly stated in Scripture. I have before alluded to the sacred chord of color (blue, purple, and scarlet, with white and gold) as appointed in the Tabernacle; this chord is the fixed base of all coloring with the workmen of every great age; the purple and scarlet will be found constantly employed by noble painters, in various unison, to the exclusion in general of pure crimson;—it is the harmony described by Herodotus as used in the battlements of Ecbatana, and the invariable base of all beautiful missal-painting; the mistake continually made by modern restorers, in supposing the purple to be a faded crimson, and substituting full crimson for it, being instantly fatal to the whole work, as, indeed, the slightest modification of any hue in a perfect color-harmony must always be.† In this chord the scarlet is the powerful color, and is on the whole the most perfect representation of abstract color which exists; blue being in a certain degree associated with shade, yellow with light, and scarlet, as absolute *color*, standing alone. Accordingly, we find it used, together with cedar wood, hyssop, and running water, as an emblem of purification, in Leviticus xiv. 4, and other places, and so used not merely as the representative of the color of blood, since it was also to be dipped in the

* It is notable, however, that nearly all the poisonous agarics are scarlet or speckled, and wholesome ones brown or gray, as if to show us that things rising out of darkness and decay are always most deadly when they are well dressed.

† Hence the intense absurdity of endeavoring to "restore" the color of ancient buildings by the hands of ignorant colorists, as at the Crystal Palace.

actual blood of a living bird. So that the cedar wood for its perfume, the hyssop for its searchingness, the water for its cleansing, and the scarlet for its kindling or enlightening, are all used as tokens of sanctification;* and it cannot be with any force alleged, in opposition to this definite appointment, that scarlet is used incidentally to illustrate the stain of sin,—"though thy sins be as scarlet,"—any more than it could be received as a diminution of the authority for using snow-whiteness as a type of purity, that Gehazi's leprosy is described as being as "white as snow." An incidental image has no authoritative meaning, but a stated ceremonial appointment has: besides, we have the reversed image given distinctly in Prov. xxxi.: "She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with *scarlet*." And, again: "Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights." So, also, the arraying of the mystic Babylon in purple and scarlet may be interpreted exactly as we choose; either, by those who think color sensual, as an image of earthly pomp and guilt, or, by those who think it sacred, as an image of assumed or pretended sanctity. It is possible the two meanings may be blended, and the idea may be that the purple and fine linen of Dives are worn in hypocritical semblance of the purple and fine linen of the high priest, being, nevertheless, themselves, in all cases typical of all beauty and purity. I hope, however, to be able some day to enter farther into these questions with respect to the art of illumination; meantime, the facts bearing on our immediate subject may be briefly recapitulated. All men, completely organized and justly tempered, enjoy color; it is meant for the perpetual comfort and delight of the human heart; it is richly bestowed on the highest works of creation, and the eminent sign and seal of perfection

* The redeemed Rahab bound for a sign a *scarlet* thread in the window. Compare Canticles iv. 3.

in them; being associated with *life* in the human body, with *light* in the sky, with *purity* and hardness in the earth,—death, night, and pollution of all kinds being colorless. And although if form and color be brought into complete opposition,* so that it should be put to us as a matter of stern choice whether we should have a work of art all of form, without color (as an Albert Durer's engraving), or all of color, without form (as an imitation of mother-of-pearl), form is beyond all comparison the more precious of the two; and in explaining the essence of objects, form is essential, and color more or less accidental (compare Chap. v. of the first section of Vol. I.); yet if color be introduced at all, it is necessary that,

* The inconsistency between perfections of color and form, which I have had to insist upon in other places, is exactly like that between articulation and harmony. We cannot have the richest harmony with the sharpest and most audible articulation of words: yet good singers will articulate clearly; and the perfect study of the science of music will conduct to a fine articulation; but the study of pronunciation will not conduct to, nor involve, that of harmony. So, also, though, as said farther on, *subtle* expression can be got without color, perfect expression never can; for the color of the face is a part of its expression. How often has that scene between Francesca di Rimini and her lover been vainly attempted by sculptors, simply because they did not observe that the main note of expression in it was in the fair sheet-lightning—fading and flaming through the cloud of passion!

> Per più fiate gli occhi ci sospinse
> Quella lettura, *e scolorocci il viso.*

And, of course, in landscape, color is the principal source of expression. Take one melancholy chord from the close of Crabbe's Patron:

> "Cold grew the foggy morn; the day was brief,
> Loose on the cherry hung the crimson leaf.
> The dew dwelt ever on the herb; the woods
> Boared with strong blasts; with mighty showers, the floods:
> All green was vanished, save of pine and yew
> That still displayed their melancholy hue;
> Save the green holly, with its berries red
> And the green moss that o'er the gravel spread."

whatever else may be wrong, *that* should be right; just as, though the music of a song may not be so essential to its influence as the meaning of the words, yet if the music be given at all, *it* must be right, or its discord will spoil the words; and it would be better, of the two, that the words should be indistinct, than the notes false. Hence, as I have said elsewhere, the business of a painter is to paint. If he can color, he is a painter, though he can do nothing else; if he cannot color, he is no painter, though he may do everything else. But it is, in fact, impossible, if he can color, but that he should be able to do more; for a faithful study of color will always give power over form, though the most intense study of form will give no power over color. The man who can see all the grays, and reds, and purples in a peach, will paint the peach rightly round, and rightly altogether; but the man who has only studied its roundness, may not see its purples and grays, and if he does not, will never get it to look like a peach; so that great power over color is always a sign of large general art-intellect. Expression of the most subtle kind can be often reached by the slight studies of caricaturists;* sometimes elaborated by the toil of the dull, and sometimes by the sentiment of the feeble; but to color well requires real talent and earnest study, and to color perfectly is the rarest and most precious power an artist can possess. Every other gift may be erroneously cultivated, but this will guide to all healthy, natural, and forcible truth; the student may be led into folly by philosophers, and into falsehood by purists; but he is always safe if he holds the hand of a colorist.

* See Appendix 1. Modern Grotesque.

CHAPTER IV.

OF TURNERIAN MYSTERY:—FIRST, AS ESSENTIAL.

§ 1. In the preceding chapters we have shown the nature of Turner's art; first, as respected sympathy with his subject; next, as respected fidelity in local detail; and thirdly, as respected principles of color. We have now finally to confirm what in various places has been said respecting his principles of *delineation*, or that mysterious and apparently uncertain execution by which he is distinguished from most other painters.

In Chap. III. § 17 of the preceding volume we concluded generally that all great drawing was *distinct* drawing; but with reference, nevertheless, to a certain sort of indistinctness, necessary to the highest art, and afterwards to be explained. And the inquiry into this seeming contradiction has, I trust, been made somewhat more interesting by what we saw respecting modern art in the fourth paragraph of Chap. XVI., namely, that it was distinguished from old art eminently by *in*distinctness, and by its idle omission of details for the sake of general effect. Perhaps also, of all modern artists, Turner is the one to whom most people would first look as the great representative of this nineteenth century cloudiness, and "ingenious speaking concerning smoke;" every one of his compositions being evidently dictated by a delight in seeing only a part of things rather than the whole, and in casting clouds and mist around them rather than unveiling them.

§ 2. And as the head of modern mystery, all the ranks

of the best ancient, and of even a very important and notable division of modern authority, seem to be arrayed against him. As we saw in preceding chapters, every great man was definite until the seventeenth century. John Bellini, Leonardo, Angelico, Durer, Perugino, Raphael,—all of them hated fog, and repudiated indignantly all manner of concealment. Clear, calm, placid, perpetual vision, far and near; endless perspicuity of space; unfatigued veracity of eternal light; perfectly accurate delineation of every leaf on the trees, every flower in the fields, every golden thread in the dresses of the figures, up to the highest point of calm brilliancy which was penetrable to the eye, or possible to the pencil,—these were their glory. On the other—the entirely mysterious—side, we have only sullen and sombre Rembrandt; desperate Salvator; filmy, futile Claude; occasionally some countenance from Correggio and Titian, and a careless condescension or two from Tintoret,*—not by any means a balanced weight of authority. Then, even in modern times, putting Turner (who is at present the prisoner at the bar) out of the question, we have, in landscape, Stanfield and Harding as definers, against Copley Fielding and Robson on the side of the clouds;† Mulready and Wilkie against Etty,—even Etty being not so much misty in conception as vague in execution, and not, therefore, quite legitimately to be claimed on the foggy side; while, finally, the whole body of the Pre-Raphaelites—certainly the greatest men, taken as a class, whom modern Europe has produced in concernment with the

* In the clouds around Mount Sinai, in the picture of the Golden Calf; the smoke turning into angels, in the Cenacolo in San Giorgio Maggiore; and several other such instances.

† Stanfield I call a definer, as opposed to Copley Fielding, because, though, like all other moderns, he paints cloud and storm, he will generally paint all the masts and yards of a ship, rather than merely her black bows glooming through the foam; and all the rocks on a hill-side, rather than the blue outline of the hill through the mist.

arts—entirely agree with the elder religious painters, and do, to their utmost, dwell in an element of light and declaration, in antagonism to all mist and deception. Truly, the clouds seem to be getting much the worst of it; and I feel, for the moment, as if nothing could be said for them. However, having been myself long a cloud-worshipper, and passed many hours of life in the pursuit of them from crag to crag, I must consider what can possibly be submitted in their defence, and in Turner's.

§ 3. The first and principal thing to be submitted is, that the clouds *are there*. Whether we like them or not, it is a fact that by far the largest spaces of the habitable world are full of them. That is Nature's will in the matter; and whatever we may theoretically determine to be expedient or beautiful, she has long ago determined what shall *be*. We may declare that clear horizons and blue skies form the most exalted scenery; but for all that, the bed of the river in the morning will still be traced by its line of white mist, and the mountain peaks will be seen at evening only in the rents between their blue fragments of towering cloud. Thus it is, and that so constantly, that it is impossible to become a faithful landscape painter without continually getting involved in effects of this kind. We may, indeed, avoid them systematically, but shall become narrow mannerists if we do.

§ 4. But not only is there a *partial* and variable mystery thus caused by clouds and vapors throughout great spaces of landscape; there is a continual mystery caused throughout *all* spaces, caused by the absolute infinity of things. WE NEVER SEE ANYTHING CLEARLY. I stated this fact partly in the chapter on Truth of Space, in the first volume, but not with sufficient illustration, so that the reader might by that chapter have been led to infer that the mystery spoken of belonged to some special distance of the landscape, whereas the fact is, that everything we

look at, be it large or small, near or distant, has an equal quantity of mystery in it; and the only question is, not how much mystery there is, but at what part of the object mystification begins. We suppose we see the ground under our feet clearly, but if we try to number its grains of dust, we shall find that it is as full of confusion and doubtful form as anything else; so that there is literally *no* point of clear sight, and there never can be. What we call seeing a thing clearly, is only seeing enough of it to *make out what it is;* this point of intelligibility varying in distance for different magnitudes and kinds of things, while the appointed quantity of mystery remains nearly the same for all. Thus: throwing an open book and an embroidered handkerchief on a lawn, at a distance of half a mile we cannot tell which is which; that is the point of mystery for the whole of those things. They are then merely white spots of indistinct shape. We approach them, and perceive that one is a book, the other a handkerchief, but cannot read the one, nor trace the embroidery of the other. The mystery has ceased to be in the whole things, and has gone into their details. We go nearer, and can now read the text and trace the embroidery, but cannot see the fibres of the paper, nor the threads of the stuff. The mystery has gone into a third place. We take both up and look closely at them; we see the watermark and the threads, but not the hills and dales in the paper's surface, nor the fine fibres which shoot off from every thread. The mystery has gone into a fourth place, where it must stay, till we take a microscope, which will send it into a fifth, sixth, hundredth, or thousandth place, according to the power we use. When, therefore, we say, we see the book *clearly*, we mean only that we know it is a book. When we say that we see the letters clearly, we mean that we know what letters they are; and artists feel that they are drawing objects

at a convenient distance when they are so near them as to know, and to be able in painting to show that they know, what the objects are, in a tolerably complete manner; but this power does not depend on any definite distance of the object, but on its size, kind, and distance, together; so that a small thing in the foreground may be precisely in the same *phase* or place of mystery as a large thing far away.

§ 5. The other day, as I was lying down to rest on the side of the hill round which the Rhone sweeps in its main angle, opposite Martigny, and looking carefully across the valley to the ridge of the hill which rises above Martigny itself, then distant about four miles, a plantain seed-vessel about an inch long, and a withered head of a scabious half an inch broad, happened to be seen rising up, out of the grass near me, across the outline of the distant hill, so as seemingly to set themselves closely beside the large pines and chestnuts which fringed that distant ridge. The plantain was eight yards from me, and the scabious seven; and to my sight, at these distances, the plantain and the far-away pines were equally clear (it being a clear day, and the sun stooping to the west). The pines, four miles off, showed their branches, but I could not count them; and two or three young and old Spanish chestnuts beside them showed their broken masses distinctly; but I could not count those masses, only I knew the trees to be chestnuts by their general look. The plantain and scabious in like manner I knew to be a plantain and scabious by their general look. I saw the plantain seed-vessel to be, somehow, rough, and that there were two little projections at the bottom of the scabious head, which I knew to mean the leaves of the calyx; but I could no more count distinctly the seeds of the plantain, or the group of leaves forming the calyx of the scabious, than I could count the branches of the far-away pines.

§ 6. Under these circumstances, it is quite evident that neither the pine nor plantain could have been rightly represented by a single dot or stroke of color. Still less could they be represented by a definite drawing, on a small scale, of a pine with all its branches clear, or of a plantain with all its seeds clear. The round dot or long stroke would represent nothing, and the clear delineation too much. They were not mere dots of color which I saw on the hill, but something full of essence of pine; out of which I could gather which were young and which were old, and discern the distorted and crabbed pines from the symmetrical and healthy pines; and feel how the evening sun was sending its searching threads among their dark leaves;—assuredly they were more than dots of color. And yet not one of their boughs or outlines could be distinctly made out, or distinctly drawn. Therefore, if I had drawn either a definite pine, or a dot, I should have been equally wrong, the right lying in an inexplicable, almost inimitable, confusion between the two.

§ 7. "But is this only the case with pines four miles away, and with plantains eight yards?"

Not so. Everything in the field of sight is equally puzzling, and can only be drawn rightly on the same difficult conditions. Try it fairly. Take the commonest, closest, most familiar thing, and strive to draw it verily as you see it. Be sure of this last fact, for otherwise you will find yourself continually drawing, not what you *see*, but what you *know*. The best practice to begin with is, sitting about three yards from a bookcase (not your own, so that you may *know* none of the titles of the books), to try to draw the books accurately, with the titles on the backs, and patterns on the bindings, as you see them. You are not to stir from your place to look what they are, but to draw them simply as they appear, giving the perfect look of neat lettering; which, nevertheless, must be (as you find it on most of the books) absolutely illegible.

Next try to draw a piece of patterned muslin or lace (of which you do not know the pattern), a little way off, and rather in the shade; and be sure you get all the grace and *look* of the pattern without going a step nearer to see what it is. Then try to draw a bank of grass, with all its blades; or a bush, with all its leaves; and you will soon begin to understand under what a universal law of obscurity we live, and perceive that all *distinct* drawing must be *bad* drawing, and that nothing can be right, till it is unintelligible.

§ 8. "How! and Pre-Raphaelitism and Durerism, and all that you have been talking to us about for these five hundred pages!"

Well, it is all right; Pre-Raphaelitism is quite as unintelligible as need be (I will answer for Durerism farther on). Examine your Pre-Raphaelite painting well, and you will find it is the precise fulfilment of these laws. You can make out your plantain head and your pine, and see entirely what they are; but yet they are full of mystery, and suggest more than you can see. So also with Turner, the true head of Pre-Raphaelitism. You shall see the spots of the trout lying dead on the rock in his foreground, but not count them. It is only the Germans and the so-called masters of drawing and defining that are wrong, not the Pre-Raphaelites.*

* Compare, if at hand, my letter in the Times of the 5th of May, 1854, on Hunt's Light of the World. I extract the passage bearing chiefly on the point in question.

"As far as regards the technical qualities of Mr. Hunt's painting, I would only ask the spectator to observe this difference between true Pre-Raphaelite work and its imitations. The true work represents all objects exactly as they would appear in nature, in the position and at the distances which the arrangement of the picture supposes. The false work represents them with all their details, as if seen through a microscope. Examine closely the ivy on the door in Mr. Hunt's picture, and there will not be found in it a single clear outline. All is the most exquisite mystery of color; becoming reality at its due distance.

Not, that is to say, so far as it is *possible* to be right. No human skill can get the absolute truth in this matter; but a drawing by Turner of a large scene, and by Holman Hunt of a small one, are as close to truth as human eyes and hands can reach.

§ 9. "Well, but how of Veronese and all the firm, fearless draughtsmen of days gone by?"

They are indeed firm and fearless, but they are all mysterious. Not one great man of them, but he will puzzle you, if you look close, to know what he means. Distinct enough, as to his general intent, indeed, just as Nature is distinct in her general intent; but examine his touches, and you will find in Veronese, in Titian, in Tintoret, in Correggio, and in all the great *painters*, properly so called, a peculiar melting and mystery about the pencilling, sometimes called softness, sometimes freedom, sometimes breadth; but in reality a most subtle confusion of colors and forms, obtained either by the apparently careless stroke of the brush, or by careful retouching with tenderest labor; but always obtained in one way or another: so that though, when compared with work that has no meaning, all great work is *distinct*,—compared with work that has narrow and stubborn meaning, all great work is *in*distinct; and if we find, on examining any picture closely, that it is all clearly to be made out, it cannot be, as painting, first-rate. There is no exception to this rule. EXCELLENCE OF THE HIGHEST KIND, WITHOUT OBSCURITY, CANNOT EXIST.

§ 10. "But you said that all authority was against Tur-

In like manner, examine the small gems on the robe of the figure. Not one will be made out in form, and yet there is not one of all those minute points of green color, but it has two or three distinctly varied shades of green in it, giving its mysterious value and lustre. The spurious imitations of Pre-Raphaelite work represent the most minute leaves and other objects with sharp outlines, but with no variety of color, and with none of the concealment, none of the infinity of nature."

ner,—Titian's and Veronese's, as well as that of the older painters."

Yes, as regards his choice of misty or foggy subject, it is so; but in this matter of mere *execution*, all the great painters are with him, though at first he seems to differ from them, on account of that choice of foggy subjects; and because, instead of painting things under circumstances when their general character is to be discerned at once (as Veronese paints human figures close to us and the size of life), he is always painting things twenty and thirty miles away, reduced to unintelligible and eccentric shades.

§ 11. "But how, then, of this foggy choice; can *that* be right in itself?"

That we will discuss in the next chapter: let us keep at present to the question of execution.

"Keeping to that question, why is it that a photograph always looks clear and sharp,—not at all like a Turner?"

Photographs never look entirely clear and sharp; but because clearness is supposed a merit in them, they are usually taken from very clearly marked and un-Turnerian subjects; and such results as are misty and faint, though often precisely those which contain the most subtle renderings of nature, are thrown away, and the clear ones only are preserved. Those clear ones depend for much of their force on the faults of the process. Photography either exaggerates shadows, or loses detail in the lights, and, in many ways which I do not here pause to explain, misses certain of the utmost subtleties of natural *effect* (which are often the things that Turner has chiefly aimed at), while it renders subtleties of *form* which no human hand could achieve. But a delicately taken photograph of a truly Turnerian subject, is far more like Turner in the drawing than it is to the work of any other artist; though, in the system of chiaroscuro, being entirely and

necessarily Rembrandtesque, the subtle mystery of the touch (Turnerism carried to an infinitely wrought refinement) is not usually perceived.

§ 12. "But how of Van Eyck, and Albert Durer, and all the clear early men?"

So far as they are *quite* clear, they are imperfect, and knowingly imperfect, if considered as painters of real appearances; but by means of this very imperfection or conventionalism, they often give certain facts which are more necessary to their purpose than these outward appearances. For instance, in Fig. 2 of Plate 25, facing page 40, I requested Mr. Le Keux to fac-simile, as far as might be, the look of the Daguerreotype; and he has admirably done so. But if Albert Durer had drawn the wall between those towers, he would have represented it with all its facts distinctly revealed, as in Fig. 1; and in many respects this clear statement is precious, though, so far as regards ocular truth, it is not natural. A modern sketcher of the "bold" school would represent the tower as in Fig. 3; that is to say, in a manner just as trenchant and firm, and therefore ocularly false, as Durer's; but, in all probability, which involved entireness of fallacy or ignorance as to the wall facts; rendering the work nearly valueless; or valuable only in color or composition; not as draughtsmanship.

Of this we shall have more to say presently, here we may rest satisfied with the conclusion that to a perfectly great manner of painting, or to entirely finished work, a certain degree of indistinctness is indispensable. As all subjects have a mystery in *them*, so all drawing must have a mystery in *it;* and from the nearest object to the most distant, if we can quite make out what the artist would be at, there is something wrong. The strokes of paint, examined closely, must be confused, odd, incomprehensible; having neither beginning nor end,—melting into each other, or straggling over each other, or going wrong

and coming right again, or fading away altogether; and if we can make anything of them quite out, that part of the drawing is wrong, or incomplete.

§ 13. Only, observe, the method by which the confusion is obtained may vary considerably according to the distance and scale of the picture itself; for very curious effects are produced upon all paintings by the distance of the eye from them. One of these is the giving a certain softness to all colors, so that hues which would look coarse or bald if seen near, may sometimes safely be left, and are left, by the great workmen in their large works, to be corrected by the kind of *bloom* which the distance of thirty or forty feet sheds over them. I say, "sometimes," because this optical effect is a very subtle one, and seems to take place chiefly on certain colors, dead fresco colors especially; also the practice of the great workmen is very different, and seems much to be regulated by the time at their disposal. Tintoret's picture of Paradise, with 500 figures in it, adapted to a supposed distance of from fifty to a hundred feet, is yet colored so tenderly that the nearer it is approached the better it looks; nor is it at all certain that the color which is wrong near, will look right a little way off, or even a great way off: I have never seen any of our Academy portraits made to look like Titian's by being hung above the line: still, distance *does* produce a definite effect on pictorial color, and in general an improving one. It also deepens the relative power of all strokes and shadows. A touch of shade which, seen near, is all but invisible, and, as far as effect on the picture is concerned, quite powerless, will be found, a little way off, to tell as a definite shadow, and to have a notable result on all that is near it; and so markedly is this the case, that in all fine and first-rate drawing there are many passages in which if we *see* the touches we are putting on, we are doing too much; they must be put on by the feeling of the hand only, and have

their effect on the eye when seen in unison, a little way off. This seems strange; but I believe the reason of it is, that, seen at some distance, the parts of the touch or touches are gathered together, and their relations truly shown; while, seen near, they are scattered and confused. On a large scale, and in common things, the phenomenon is of constant occurrence; the "dirt bands" on a glacier, for instance, are not to be counted on the glacier itself, and yet their appearance is truly stated by Professor Forbes to be "*one of great importance*, though from the two circumstances of being *best seen at a distance*, or considerable height, and in a feeble or slanting light, it had very naturally been overlooked both by myself and others, like what are called blind paths over moors, visible at a distance, but lost when we stand upon them."*

§ 14. Not only, however, does this take place in a picture very notably, so that a group of touches will tell as a compact and intelligible mass, a little way off, though confused when seen near; but also a dark touch gains at a little distance in apparent *darkness*, a light touch in apparent *light*, and a colored touch in apparent color, to a degree inconceivable by an unpractised person; so that literally, a good painter is obliged, working near his picture, to do in everything only about half of what he wants, the rest being done by the distance. And if the effect, at such distance, is to be of confusion, then sometimes seen near, the work must be a confusion worse confounded, almost utterly unintelligible; hence the amazement and blank wonder of the public at some of the finest passages of Turner, which look like a mere meaningless and disorderly work of chance; but, rightly understood, are preparations for a given result, like the most subtle moves of a game of chess, of which no by-

* Travels through the Alps, chap. viii.

stander can for a long time see the intention, but which are, in dim, underhand, wonderful way, bringing out their foreseen and inevitable result.

§ 15. And, be it observed, no other means would have brought out that result. Every distance and size of picture has its own proper method of work; the artist will necessarily vary that method somewhat according to circumstances and expectations: he may sometimes finish in a way fitted for close observation, to please his patron, or catch the public eye; and sometimes be tempted into such finish by his zeal, or betrayed into it by forgetfulness, as I think Tintoret has been, slightly, in his Paradise, above mentioned. But there never yet was a picture thoroughly effective at a distance, which did not look more or less unintelligible near. Things which in distant effect are folds of dress, seen near are only two or three grains of golden color set there apparently by chance; what far off is a solid limb, near is a gray shade with a misty outline, so broken that it is not easy to find its boundary; and what far off may perhaps be a man's face, near, is only a piece of thin brown color, enclosed by a single flowing wave of a brush loaded with white, while three brown touches across one edge of it, ten feet away, become a mouth and eyes. The more subtle the power of the artist, the more curious the difference will be between the apparent means and the effect produced; and one of the most sublime feelings connected with art consists in the perception of this very strangeness, and in a sympathy with the foreseeing and foreordaining power of the artist. In Turner, Tintoret, and Paul Veronese, the intenseness of perception, first, as to what is to be done, and then, of the means of doing it, is so colossal, that I always feel in the presence of their pictures just as other people would in that of a supernatural being. Common talkers use the word "magic" of a great painter's power without

knowing what they mean by it. They mean a great truth. That power *is* magical; so magical, that, well understood, no enchanter's work could be more miraculous or more *appalling;* and though I am not often kept from saying things by timidity, I should be afraid of offending the reader, if I were to define to him accurately the kind and the degree of awe, with which I have stood before Tintoret's Adoration of the Magi, at Venice, and Veronese's Marriage in Cana, in the Louvre.

§ 16. It will now, I hope, be understood how easy it is for dull artists to mistake the mystery of great masters for carelessness, and their subtle concealement of intention for want of intention. For one person who can perceive the delicacy, invention, and veracity of Tintoret or Reynolds * there are thousands who can perceive the dash of the brush and the confusion of the color. They suppose that the merit consists in dash and confusion, and that they may easily rival Reynolds by being unintelligible, and Tintoret by being impetuous. But I assure them, very seriously, that obscurity is *not* always admirable, nor impetuosity always right; that disorder does not necessarily imply discretion, nor haste, security. It is sometimes difficult to understand the words of a deep thinker; but it is equally difficult to understand an idiot; and young students will find it, on the whole, the best thing they can do to strive to be *clear;* † not affectedly clear, but manfully and firmly. Mean something, and say something, whenever you touch canvas; yield

* Reynolds is usually admired for his dash and speed. His true merit is in an ineffable subtlety combined with his speed. The tenderness of some of Reynolds's touches is quite beyond telling.

† Especially in distinction of species of things. It may be doubtful whether in a great picture we are to represent the bloom upon a grape, but never doubtful that we are to paint a grape so as to be known from a cherry.

neither to the affectation of precision nor of speed, and trust to time, and your honest labor, to invest your work gradually, in such measure and kind as your genius can reach, with the tenderness that comes of love, and the mystery that comes of power.

CHAPTER V.

OF TURNERIAN MYSTERY:—SECONDLY, WILFUL.

§ 1. In the preceding chapter we were concerned only with the mystery necessary in all great art. We have yet to inquire into the nature of that more special love of concealment in which Turner is the leading representative of modern cloud-worship; causing Dr. Waagen sapiently to remark that "he" had here succeeded in combining "a crude painted medley with a general foggy appearance." *

As, for defence of his universal indistinctness, my appeal was in the last chapter to universal fact, so, for defence of this special indistinctness, my first appeal is in this chapter to special fact. An English painter justifiably loves fog, because he is born in a foggy country; as an Italian painter justifiably loves clearness, because he is born in a comparatively clear country. I have heard a traveller familiar with the East complain of the effect in a picture of Copley Fielding's, that "it was such very bad weather." But it ought not to be bad weather to the English. Our green country depends for its life on those kindly rains and floating swirls of cloud; we ought, therefore, to love them and to paint them.

§ 2. But there is no need to rest my defence on this narrow English ground. The fact is, that though the

* Art and Artists in England, vol. ii., p. 151. The other characteristics which Dr. Waagen discovers in Turner are, "such a looseness of treatment, such a total want of truth, as I never before met with."

climates of the South and East may be *comparatively* clear, they are no more absolutely clear than our own northern air; and that wherever a landscape-painter is placed, if he paints faithfully, he will have continually to paint effects of mist. Intense clearness, whether in the North after or before rain, or in some moments of twilight in the South, is always, as far as I am acquainted with natural phenomena, a *notable* thing. Mist of some sort, or mirage, or confusion of light, or of cloud, are the general facts; the distance may vary in different climates at which the effects of mist begin, but they are always present; and therefore, in all probability it is meant that we should enjoy them.

§ 3. Nor does it seem to me in anywise difficult to understand why they should be thus appointed for enjoyment. In former parts of this work we were able to trace a certain delightfulness in every visible feature of natural things which was typical of any great spiritual truth; surely, therefore, we need not wonder now, that mist and all its phenomena have been made delightful to us, since our happiness as thinking beings must depend on our being content to accept only partial knowledge, even in those matters which chiefly concern us. If we insist upon perfect intelligibility and complete declaration in every moral subject, we shall instantly fall into misery of unbelief. Our whole happiness and power of energetic action depend upon our being able to breathe and live in the cloud; content to see it opening here and closing there; rejoicing to catch, through the thinnest films of it, glimpses of stable and substantial things; but yet perceiving a nobleness even in the concealment, and rejoicing that the kindly veil is spread where the untempered light might have scorched us, or the infinite clearness wearied.

§ 4. And I believe that the resentment of this interference of the mist is one of the forms of proud error which

are too easily mistaken for virtues. To be content in utter darkness and ignorance is indeed unmanly, and therefore we think that to love light and seek knowledge must always be right. Yet (as in all matters before observed,) wherever *pride* has any share in the work, even knowledge and light my be ill pursued. Knowledge is good, and light is good, yet man perished in seeking knowledge, and moths perished in seeking light; and if we, who are crushed before the moth, will not accept such mystery as is needful for us, we shall perish in like manner. But, accepted in humbleness, it instantly becomes an element of pleasure; and I think that every rightly constituted mind ought to rejoice, not so much in knowing anything clearly, as in feeling that there is infinitely more which it cannot know. None but proud or weak men would mourn over this, for we may always know more if we choose, by working on; but the pleasure is, I think, to humble people, in knowing that the journey is endless, the treasure inexhaustible,—watching the cloud still march before them with its summitless pillar, and being sure that, to the end of time and to the length of eternity, the mysteries of its infinity will still open farther and farther, their dimness being the sign and necessary adjunct of their inexhaustibleness. I know there are an evil mystery and a deathful dimness,—the mystery of the great Babylon—the dimness of the sealed eye and soul; but do not let us confuse these with the glorious mystery of the things which the angels "desire to look into," or with the dimness which, even before the clear eye and open soul, still rests on sealed pages of the eternal volume.

§ 5. And going down from this great truth to the lower truths which are types of it in smaller matters, we shall find, that as soon as people try honestly to see all they can of anything, they come to a point where a noble dimness begins. They see more than others; but the con-

sequence of their seeing more is, that they feel they cannot see all; and the more intense their perception, the more the crowd of things which they *partly* see will multiply upon them; and their delight may at last principally consist in dwelling on this cloudy part of their prospect, somewhat casting away or aside what to them has become comparatively common, but is perhaps the sum and substance of all that other people see in the thing, for the utmost subtleties and shadows and glancings of it cannot be caught but by the most practised vision. And as a delicate ear rejoices in the slighter and more modulated passages of sound which to a blunt ear are utterly monotonous in their quietness, or unintelligible in their complication, so, when the eye is exquisitely keen and clear, it is fain to rest on gray films of shade, and wandering rays of light, and intricacies of tender form, passing over hastily, as unworthy or commonplace, what to a less educated sense appears the whole of the subject.* In painting, this progress of the eye is marked always by one consistent sign—its sensibility, namely, to effects of *gradation* in light and color, and habit of looking for them, rather even than for the signs of the essence of the subject. It will, indeed, see more of that essence than is seen by other eyes; and its choice of the points to be seized upon will be always regulated by that special sympathy which we have above examined as the motive of the Turnerian picturesque; but yet, the more it is cultivated, the more of light and color it will perceive, the less of substance.

§ 6. Thus, when the eye is quite uncultivated, it sees that a man is a man, and a face is a face, but has no idea what shadows or lights fall upon the form or features. Cultivate it to some degree of artistic power, and it will

* And yet, all these intricacies will produce for it another whole; as simple and natural as the child's first conception of the thing; only more comprehensive. See above, Chap. III., § 21.

then see shadows distinctly, but only the more vigorous of them. Cultivate it still farther, and it will see light within light, and shadow within shadow, and will continually refuse to rest in what it had already discovered, that it may pursue what is more removed and more subtle, until at last it comes to give its chief attention and display its chief power on gradations which to an untrained faculty are partly matters of indifference, and partly imperceptible. That these subtle gradations have indeed become matters of primal importance to it, may be ascertained by observing that they are the things it will last part with, as the object retires into distance; and that, though this distance may become so great as to render the real nature of the object quite undiscernible, the gradations of light upon it will not be lost.

§ 7. For instance, Fig. 1, on the opposite page, Plate 26, is a tolerably faithful rendering of the look of a wall tower of a Swiss town as it would be seen within some hundred yards of it. Fig. 2 is (as nearly as I can render it) a fac-simile of Turner's actual drawing of this tower, at a presumed distance of about half a mile. It has far less of intelligible delineation, either of windows, cornices, or tiles; but intense care has still been given to get the pearly roundness of the side, and the exact relations of all the tones of shade. And now, if Turner wants to remove the tower still farther back, he will gradually let the windows and stones all disappear together, before he will quit his shadows and delicately centralized rays. At Fig. 3 the tower is nearly gone, but the pearly roundness of it and principal lights of it are there still. At Fig. 4 (Turner's ultimate condition in distance) the essence of the thing is quite unintelligible; we cannot answer for its being a tower at all. But the gradations of light are still there, and as much pains have been taken to get them as in any of the other instances. A vulgar artist would have kept something of the form of

PLATE XXVI,—THE LAWS OF EVANESCENCE.

the tower, expressing it by a few touches; and people would call it a clever drawing. Turner lets the tower melt into air, but still he works half an hour or so over those delicate last gradations, which perhaps not many people in England besides himself can fully see, as not many people can understand the final work of a great mathematician. I assume, of course, in this example, that the tower, as it grows less and less distinct, becomes part of the subject of a *larger* picture. Fig. 1 represents nearly what Turner's treatment of it would be if it were the principal subject of a vignette; and Fig. 4 his treatment of it as an object in the extreme distance of a large oil picture. If at the same supposed distance it entered into a smaller drawing, so as to be much smaller in size, he might get the gradations with less trouble, sometimes even by a single sweep of the brush; but *some* gradation would assuredly be retained, though the tower were diminished to the height of one of the long letters of this type.

§ 8. "But is Turner right in doing this?"

Yes. The truth is indeed so. If you watch any object as it fades in distance, it will lose gradually its force, its intelligibility, its anatomy, its whole comprehensible being; but it will *never* lose its gradation of light. Up to the last moment, what light is seen on it, feebly glimmering and narrowed almost to a point or a line, is still full of change. One part is brighter than another, and brighter with as lovely and tender increase as it was when nearest to us; and at last, though a white house ten miles away will be seen only as a small square spot of light, its windows, doors, or roof, being as utterly invisible as if they were not in existence, the gradation of its light will not be lost; one part of the spot will be seen to be brighter than another.

§ 9. Is there not a deep meaning in this? We, in our daily looking at the thing, think that its own make is the

most important part of it. Windows and porticos, eaves and cornices, how interesting and how useful are they! Surely, the chief importance of the thing is in these. No; not in these; but in the play of the light of heaven upon it. There is a place and time when all those windows and porticos will be lost sight of; when the only question becomes, "what light had it?" How much of heaven was looking upon it? What were the broad relations of it, in light and darkness, to the sky and earth, and all things around it? It might have strange humors and ways of its own—many a rent in its wall, and many a roughness on its roof; or it might have many attractivenesses and noblenesses of its own—fair mouldings and gay ornaments; but the time comes when all these are vain, and when the slight, wandering warmth of heaven's sunshine which the building itself felt not, and not one eye in a thousand saw, becomes all in all. I leave the reader to follow out the analogies of this.

§ 10. "Well, but," it is still objected, "if this be so, why is it necessary to insist, as you do always, upon the most minute and careful renderings of form?"

Because, though these gradations of light are indeed, as an object dies in the distance, the only things it can retain, yet as it lives its active life near us, those very gradations can only be seen properly by the effect they have on its character. You can only show how the light affects the object, by knowing thoroughly what the object is; and noble mystery differs from ignoble, in being a veil thrown between us and something definite, known, and substantial; but the ignoble mystery is a veil cast before chaos, the studious concealment of Nothing.

§ 11. There is even a way in which the very definiteness of Turner's knowledge adds to the mystery of his pictures. In the course of the first volume I had several times occasion to insist on the singular importance of cast shadows, and the chances of their sometimes gaining

supremacy in visibility over even the things that cast them. Now a cast shadow is a much more curious thing than we usually suppose. The strange shapes it gets into—the manner in which it stumbles over everything that comes in its way, and frets itself into all manner of fantastic schism, taking neither the shape of the thing that casts it, nor of that it is cast upon, but an extraordinary, stretched, flattened, fractured, ill-jointed anatomy of its own—cannot be imagined until one is actually engaged in shadow-hunting. If any of these wayward umbræ are faithfully remembered and set down by the painter, they nearly always have an unaccountable look, quite different from anything one would have invented or philosophically conjectured for a shadow; and it constantly happens, in Turner's distances, that such strange pieces of broken shade, accurately remembered, or accurately invented, as the case may be, cause a condition of unintelligibility, quaint and embarrassing almost in exact proportion to the amount of truth it contains.

§ 12. I believe the reader must now sufficiently perceive that the right of being obscure is not one to be lightly claimed; it can only be founded on long effort to be intelligible, and on the present power of *being* intelligible to the exact degree which the nature of the thing admits. Nor shall we, I hope, any more have difficulty in understanding how the noble mystery and the ignoble, though direct opposites, are yet continually mistaken for each other—the last aping the first; and the most wretched artists taking pride in work which is simply slurred, slovenly, ignorant, empty, and insolent, as if it were nobly mysterious (just as a drunkard who cannot articulate supposes himself oracular); whereas the noble art-mystery, as all noble language-mystery, is reached only by intense labor. Striving to speak with uttermost truth of expression, weighing word against word, and wasting none, the great speaker, or writer, toils first

into perfect intelligibleness, then, as he reaches to higher subject, and still more concentrated and wonderful utterance, he becomes ambiguous—as Dante is ambiguous,—half a dozen different meanings lightening out in separate rays from every word, and, here and there, giving rise to much contention of critics as to what the intended meaning actually was. But it is no drunkard's babble for all that, and the men who think it so, at the third hour of the day, do not highly honor *themselves* in the thought.

§ 13. And now observe how perfectly the conclusions arrived at here consist with those of the third chapter, and how easily we may understand the meaning of that vast weight of authority which we found at first ranged against the clouds, and strong in arms on the side of intelligibility. Nearly all great men must, for the reasons above given, be intelligible. Even, if they are to be the greatest, still they must struggle through intelligibility to obscurity; if of the second class, then the best thing they can do, all their lives through, is to be intelligible. Therefore the enormous majority of all good and true men will be *clear* men; and the drunkards, sophists, and sensualists will, for the most part, sink back into the fog-bank, and remain wrapped in darkness, unintelligibility, and futility. Yet, here and there, once in a couple of centuries, one man will rise past clearness, and become dark with excess of light.

§ 14. "Well, then, you mean to say that the tendency of this age to general cloudiness, as opposed to the old religious clearness of painting, is one of degradation; but that Turner is this one man who has risen *past* clearness?"

Yes. With some modifications of the saying, I mean that, but those modifications will take us a little time to express accurately.

For, first, it will not do to condemn every minor painter utterly, the moment we see he is foggy. Copley

1. Ancient, or Giottesque.

6. Modern, or Blottesque.

2. Purest.

5. Constablesque.

3. Turneresque.

4. Hardingesque.

PLATE XXVII. —THE ASPEN, UNDER IDEALIZATION.

Fielding, for instance, was a minor painter; but his love of obscurity in rain clouds, and dew-mist on downs, was genuine love, full of sweetness and happy aspiration; and, in this way, a little of the light of the higher mystery is often caught by the simplest men when they keep their hearts open.

§ 15. Neither will it be right to set down every painter for a great man, the moment we find he is clear; for there is a hard and vulgar intelligibility of nothingness, just as there is an ambiguity of nothingness. And as often, in conversation, a man who speaks but badly and indistinctly has, nevertheless, got much to say; and a man who speaks boldly and plainly may yet say what is little worth hearing; so, in painting, there are men who can express themselves but blunderingly, and yet have much in them to express; and there are others who talk with great precision, whose works are yet very impertinent and untrustworthy assertions. Sir Joshua Reynolds is full of fogginess and shortcomings as compared with either of the Caraccis; but yet one Sir Joshua is worth all the Caraccis in Europe; and so, in our modern water-color societies, there are many men who define clearly enough, all whose works, put together, are not worth a careless blot by Cox or Barrett.

§ 16. Let me give one illustration more, which will be also of some historical usefulness in marking the relations of the clear and obscure schools.

We have seen, in our investigation of Greek landscape, Homer's intense love of the aspen poplar. For once, in honor of Homer and the Greeks, I will take an aspen for the subject of comparison, and glance at the different modes in which it would have been, or was, represented from the earliest to the present stage of landscape art.

The earliest manner which comes within our field of examination is that of the thirteenth century. Fig. 1, Plate 27, is an aspen out of the wood in which Absalom

is slain, from a Psalter in my own possession, executed, certainly, after the year 1250, and before 1272: the other trees in the wood being, first, of course, the oak in which Absalom is caught, and a sycamore. All these trees are somewhat more conventional than is even usual at the period; though, for this reason, the more characteristic as examples of earliest work. There is no great botanical accuracy until some forty years later (at least in painting); so that I cannot be quite sure, the leaf not being flat enough at the base, that this tree is meant for an aspen: but it is so in all probability; and, whether it be or not, serves well enough to mark the definiteness and symmetry of the old art,—a symmetry which, be it always observed, is NEVER formal or unbroken. This tree, though it looks formal enough, branches unequally at the top of the stem. But the lowest figure in Plate 7, Vol. III., is a better example from the MS. Sloane, 1975, Brit. Mus. Every plant in that herbarium is drawn with some approach to accuracy, in leaf, root, and flower; while yet all are subjected to the sternest conventional arrangement; colored in almost any way that pleases the draughtsman, and set on quaint grounds of barred color, like bearings on shields; * one side of the plant always balancing the other, but never without some transgression or escape from the law of likeness, as in the heads of the cyclamen flower, and several other parts of this design. It might seem at first, that the root was more carelessly drawn than the rest, and uglier in color; but this is in pure conscientiousness. The workman knew that a root was ugly and earthy; he would not make it ornamental and delicate. He would sacrifice his pleasant colors and graceful lines at once

* Compare Vol. III. Chap. XIV. § 13. Touching the exact degree in which ignorance or incapacity is mingled with wilful conventionalism in this drawing, we shall inquire in the chapters on Vegetation.

PLATE XXVIII.—ASPEN, UNIDEALIZED.

for the radical fact; and rather spoil his page than flatter a fibre.

§ 17. Here, then, we have the first mediæval condition of art, consisting in a fenced, but varied, symmetry; a perfect definiteness; and a love of nature, more or less interfered with by conventionalism and imperfect knowledge. Fig. 2 in Plate 27 represents the next condition of mediæval art, in which the effort at imitation is contending with the conventional type. This aspen is from the MS. Cotton, Augustus, A. 5, from which I have already taken an example of rocks to compare with Leonardo's. There can be no doubt here about the species of the tree intended, as throughout the MS. its illuminator has carefully distinguished the oak, the willow, and the aspen; and this example, though so small (it is engraved of the actual size), is very characteristic of the aspen ramification; and in one point, of ramification in general, namely, the division of the tree into two masses, each branching outwards, not across each other. Whenever a tree divides at first into two or three nearly equal main branches, the secondary branches always spring from the outside of the divided ones, just as, when a tree grows under a rock or wall, it shoots away from it, never towards it. The beautiful results of this arrangement we shall trace in the next volume; meantime, in the next Plate (28) I have drawn the main * ramifications of a real aspen, growing freely, but in a sheltered place, as far as may be necessary to illustrate the point in question.

§ 18. This example, Fig. 2 in Plate 27, is sufficiently characteristic of the purist mediæval landscape, though there is somewhat more leaning to naturalism than is usual at the period. The next example, Fig. 3, is from Turner's vignette of St. Anne's Hill (Rogers's Poems, p. 214). Turner almost always groups his trees, so that I

* Only the *main* lines: the outer sprays have had no pains taken with them. as I am going to put some leaves on them in next volume.

have had difficulty in finding one on a small scale and isolated, which would be characteristic of him; nor is this one completely so, for I had no access to the original vignette, it being, I believe, among the drawings that have been kept from the public, now these four years, because the Chancery lawyers do not choose to determine the meaning of Turner's perfectly intelligible, though informal, will; and Mr. Goodall's engraving, which I have copied, though right in many respects, is not representative of the dotted touch by which Turner expressed the aspen foliage. I have not, however, ventured to alter it, except only by adding the extremities where they were hidden in the vignette by the trellis-work above.

The principal difference between the Turnerian aspen and the purist aspen is, it will be seen, in the expression of lightness and confusion of foliage, and roundness of the tree as a mass; while the purist tree, like the thirteenth century one, is still flat. All attempt at the expression of individual leaves is now gone, the tree being too far off to justify their delineation; but the direction of the light, and its gradations, are carefully studied.

§ 19. Fig. 6 is a tolerable fac-simile* of a little chalk sketch of Harding's; quite inimitable in the quantity of life and truth obtained by about a quarter of a minute's work; but beginning to show the faulty vagueness and carelessness of modernism. The stems, though beautifully free, are not thoroughly drawn or rounded; and in the mass of the tree, though well formed, the tremulousness and transparency of leafage are lost. Nor is it possible, by Harding's manner of drawing, to express such ultimate truths: his execution, which, *in its way*, no one can at all equal (the best chalk drawing of Calame and other foreign masters being quite childish and feeble in

* It is quite impossible to fac-simile good free work. Both Turner and Harding suffer grievously in this plate.

comparison), is yet sternly limited in its reach, being originally based on the assumption that nothing is to be delicately drawn, and that the method is only good which insures specious incompletion.

It will be observed, also, that there is a leaning first to one side, then to the other, in Harding's aspen, which marks the wild picturesqueness of modernism as opposed to the quiet but stiff dignity of the purist (Fig. 2); Turner occupying exactly the intermediate place.

The next example (Fig. 5) is an aspen of Constable's, on the left in the frontispiece to Mr. Leslie's life of him. Here we have arrived at the point of total worthlessness, the tree being as flat as the old purist one, but, besides, wholly false in ramification, idle, and undefined in every respect; it being, however, just possible still to discern what the tree is meant for, and therefore, the type of the worst modernism not being completely established.

§ 20. Fig. 4 establishes this type, being the ordinary condition of tree treatment in our blotted water-color drawings; the nature of the tree being entirely lost sight of, and no accurate knowledge, of any kind, possessed or communicated.

Thus, from the extreme of definiteness and light, in the thirteenth century (the middle of the Dark Ages!), we pass to the extreme of uncertainty and darkness, in the middle of the nineteenth century.

As, however, the definite mediæval work has some faults, so the indefinite modern work has some virtues, its very uncertainty enabling it to appeal pleasantly to the imagination (though in an inky manner, as described above, Vol. III. Chap. x. § 10), and sometimes securing qualities of color which could not otherwise be obtained. It ought, however, if we would determine its true standing, to be compared, not with the somewhat forced and narrow decision of the thirteenth century, but with the perfect and well-informed decision of Albert Durer and his fellow-

workmen. For the proper representation of these there was no room in this plate; so, in Plate 25, above, on each side of the daguerreotyped towers of Fribourg, I have given, Fig. 1, a Dureresque, and Fig. 3, a Blottesque, version of the intermediate wall. The latter version may, perhaps, be felt to have some pleasantness in its apparent ease; and it has a practical advantage, in its capability of being executed in a quarter of a minute, while the Dureresque statement *cannot* be made in less than a quarter of an hour. But the latter embraces not only as much as is worth the extra time, but even an infinite of contents, beyond and above the other, for the other is in no single place clear in its assertion of *any*thing; whereas the Dureresque work, asserting clearly many most interesting facts about the grass on the ledges, the bricks of the windows, and the growth of the foliage, is forever a useful and trustworthy record; the other forever an empty dream. If it is a beautiful dream, full of lovely color and good composition, we will not quarrel with it; but it can never be so, unless it is founded first on the Dureresque knowledge, and suggestive of it, through all its own mystery or incompletion. So that by all students the Dureresque is the manner to be first adopted, and calmly continued as long as possible; and if their inventive instincts do not, in after life, *force* them to swifter or more cloudy execution,—if at any time it becomes a matter of doubt with them how far to surrender their gift of accuracy,—let them be assured that it is best always to err on the side of clearness; to live in the illumination of the thirteenth century rather than the mysticism of the nineteenth, and vow themselves to the cloister rather than to lose themselves in the desert.

§ 21. I am afraid the reader must be tired of this matter; and yet there is one question more which I must for a moment touch upon, in conclusion, namely, the mystery of *clearness itself*. In an Italian twilight, when,

sixty or eighty miles away, the ridge of the Western Alps rises in its dark and serrated blue against the crystalline vermilion, there is still unsearchableness, but an unsearchableness without cloud or concealment,—an infinite unknown, but no sense of any veil or interference between us and it: we are separated from it not by any anger or storm, not by any vain and fading vapor, but only by the deep infinity of the thing itself. I find that the great religious painters rejoiced in that kind of unknowableness, and in that only; and I feel that even if they had had all the power to do so, still they would not have put rosy mists and blue shadows behind their sacred figures, but only the far-away sky and cloudless mountains. Probably the right conclusion is that the clear and cloudy mysteries are alike noble; but that the beauty of the wreaths of frost mist, folded over banks of greensward deep in dew, and of the purple clouds of evening, and the wreaths of fitful vapor gliding through groves of pine, and irised around the pillars of waterfalls, is more or less typical of the kind of joy which we should take in the imperfect knowledge granted to the earthly life, while the serene and cloudless mysteries set forth that belonging to the redeemed life. But of one thing I am well assured, that so far as the clouds are regarded, not as concealing the truth of other things, but as themselves true and separate creations, they are not usually beheld by us with enough honor; we have too great veneration for cloudlessness. My reasons for thinking this I will give in the next chapter; here we have, I believe, examined as far as necessary, the general principles on which Turner worked, and justified his adoption of them so far as they contradicted preceding practice.

It remains for us to trace, with more observant patience, the ground which was marked out in the first volume; and, whereas in that volume we hastily compared the truth of Turner with that of preceding land-

scapists, we shall now, as closely as possible, examine the range of what he himself has done and felt, and the way in which it is likely to influence the future acts and thoughts of men.

§ 22. And I shall attempt to do this, first, by examining what the real effect of the things painted—clouds, or mountains, or whatever else they may be—is, or ought to be, in general, on men's minds, showing the grounds of their beauty or impressiveness as best I can; and then examining how far Turner seems to have understood these reasons of beauty, and how far his work interprets, or can take the place of nature. But in doing this, I shall, for the sake of convenience, alter the arrangement which I followed in the first volume; and instead of examining the sky first, treat of it last; because, in many illustrations which I must give of other things, I shall have to introduce pieces of sky background which will all be useful for reference when I can turn back to them from the end of the book, but which I could not refer to in advance without anticipating all my other illustrations. Nevertheless, some points which I have to note respecting the meaning of the sky are so intimately connected with the subjects we have just been examining, that I cannot properly defer their consideration to another place; and I shall state them, therefore, in the next chapter, afterwards proceeding, in the order I adopted in the first volume, to examine the beauty of mountains, water, and vegetation.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FIRMAMENT

§ 1. THE task which we now enter upon, as explained in the close of the preceding chapter, is the ascertaining as far as possible what the proper effect of the natural beauty of different objects *ought* to be on the human mind, and the degree in which this nature of theirs, and true influence, have been understood and transmitted by Turner.

I mean to begin with the mountains, for the sake of convenience in illustration; but, in the proper order of thought, the clouds ought to be considered first; and I think it will be well, in this intermediate chapter, to bring to a close that line of reasoning by which we have gradually, as I hope, strengthened the defences around the love of mystery which distinguishes our modern art; and to show, on final and conclusive authority, what noble things these clouds are, and with what feeling it seems to be intended by their Creator that we should contemplate them.

§ 2. The account given of the stages of Creation in the first chapter of Genesis, is in every respect clear and intelligible to the simplest reader, except in the statement of the work of the second day. I suppose that this statement is passed over by careless readers without an endeavor to understand it; and contemplated by simple and faithful readers as a sublime mystery, which was not intended to be understood. But there is no mystery

in any other part of the chapter, and it seems to me unjust to conclude that any was intended here.

And the passage ought to be peculiarly interesting to us, as being the first in the Bible in which the *heavens* are named, and the only one in which the word "Heaven," all important as that word is to our understanding of the most precious promises of Scripture, receives a definite explanation.

Let us, therefore, see whether, by a little careful comparison of the verse with other passages in which the word occurs, we may not be able to arrive at as clear an understanding of this portion of the chapter as of the rest.

§ 3. In the first place, the English word "Firmament" itself is obscure and useless; because we never employ it but as a synonym of heaven; it conveys no other distinct idea to us; and the verse, though from our familiarity with it we imagine that it possesses meaning, has in reality no more point or value than if it were written, "God said, let there be a something in the midst of the waters, and God called the something Heaven."

But the marginal reading, "Expansion," has definite value; and the statement that "God said, let there be an expansion in the midst of the waters, and God called the expansion Heaven," has an apprehensible meaning.

§ 4. Accepting this expression as the one intended, we have next to ask what expansion there is, between two waters, describable by the term Heaven. Milton adopts the term "expanse;" * but he understands it of the whole

* "God made
The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,
Transparent, elemental air, diffused
In circuit to the uttermost convex
Of this great round." *Paradise Lost*, book vii.

volume of the air which surrounds the earth. Whereas, so far as we can tell, there is no water beyond the air, in the fields of space; and the whole expression of division of waters from waters is thus rendered valueless.

§ 5. Now, with respect to this whole chapter, we must remember always that it is intended for the instruction of all mankind, not for the learned reader only; and that, therefore, the most simple and natural intrepretation is the likeliest in general to be the true one. An unscientific reader knows little about the manner in which the volume of the atmosphere surrounds the earth; but I imagine that he could hardly glance at the sky when rain was falling in the distance, and see the level line of the bases of the clouds from which the shower descended, without being able to attach an instant and easy meaning to the words "Expansion in the midst of the waters." And if, having once seized this idea, he proceeded to examine it more accurately, he would perceive at once, if he had ever noticed *anything* of the nature of clouds, that the level line of their bases did indeed most severely and stringently divide "waters from waters," that is to say, divide water in its collective and tangible state, from water in its divided and aërial state; or the waters which *fall* and *flow*, from those which *rise* and *float*. Next, if we try this interpretation in the theological sense of the word *Heaven*, and examine whether the clouds are spoken of as God's dwelling-place, we find God going before the Israelites in a pillar of cloud; revealing Himself in a cloud on Sinai; appearing in a cloud on the mercy-seat, filling the Temple of Solomon with the cloud when its dedication is accepted; appearing in a great cloud to Ezekiel; ascending into a cloud before the eyes of the disciples on Mount Olivet; and in like manner returning to Judgment. "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him." "Then shall they see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power

and great glory."* While farther, the "clouds" and "heavens" are used as interchangeable words in those Psalms which most distinctly set forth the power of God: "He bowed the heavens also, and came down; he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies." And, again: "Thy mercy, oh Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds." And, again: "His excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds." Again: "The clouds poured out water, the skies sent out a sound, the voice of thy thunder was in the heaven." Again: "Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne; the heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory."

§ 6. In all these passages the meaning is unmistakable, if they possess definite meaning at all. We are too apt to take them merely for sublime and vague imagery, and therefore gradually to lose the apprehension of their life and power. The expression, "He bowed the Heavens," for instance, is, I suppose, received by most readers as a magnificent hyperbole, having reference to some peculiar and fearful manifestation of God's power to the writer of the Psalm in which the words occur. But the expression either has plain meaning, or it has *no* meaning. Understand by the term "Heavens" the compass of infinite space around the earth, and the expression, "bowed the Heavens," however sublime, is wholly without meaning; infinite space cannot be bent or bowed. But understand by the "Heavens" the veil of clouds above the earth, and the expression is neither hyperbolical nor obscure; it is pure, plain, and accurate truth, and

* The reader may refer to the following texts, which it is needless to quote: Exod. xiii. 21, xvi. 10, xix. 9, xxiv. 16, xxxiv. 5, Levit. xvi. 2, Num. x. 34, Judges v. 4, 1 Kings viii. 10, Ezek. i. 4, Dan. vii. 13, Matt. xxiv. 30, 1 Thess. iv. 17, Rev. i. 7.

it describes God, not as revealing Himself in any peculiar way to David, but doing what he is still doing before our own eyes day by day. By accepting the words in their simple sense, we are thus led to apprehend the immediate presence of the Deity, and His purpose of manifesting Himself as near us whenever the storm-cloud stoops upon its course; while by our vague and inaccurate acceptance of the words we remove the idea of His presence far from us, into a region which we can neither see nor know; and gradually, from the close realization of a living God who "maketh the clouds his chariot," we refine and explain ourselves into dim and distant suspicion of an inactive God, inhabiting inconceivable places, and fading into the multitudinous formalisms of the laws of Nature.

§ 7. All errors of this kind—and in the present day we are in constant and grievous danger of falling into them—arise from the originally mistaken idea that man can, "by searching, find out God—find out the Almighty to perfection;" that is to say, by help of courses of reasoning and accumulations of science, apprehend the nature of the Deity in a more exalted and more accurate manner than in a state of comparative ignorance; whereas it is clearly necessary, from the beginning to the end of time, that God's way of revealing Himself to His creatures should be a *simple* way, which *all* those creatures may understand. Whether taught or untaught, whether of mean capacity or enlarged, it is necessary that communion with their Creator should be possible to all; and the admission to such communion must be rested, not on their having a knowledge of astronomy, but on their having a human soul. In order to render this communion possible, the Deity has stooped from His throne, and has not only, in the person of the Son, taken upon him the veil of our human *flesh*, but, in the person of the Father, taken upon Him the veil of our human *thoughts*, and permitted us, by His own spoken authority, to conceive Him simply

and clearly as a loving Father and Friend;—a being to be walked with and reasoned with; to be moved by our entreaties, angered by our rebellion, alienated by our coldness, pleased by our love, and glorified by our labor; and, finally, to be beheld in immediate and active presence in all the powers and changes of creation. This conception of God, which is the child's, is evidently the only one which can be universal, and therefore the only one which *for us* can be true. The moment that, in our pride of heart, we refuse to accept the condescension of the Almighty, and desire Him, instead of stooping to hold our hands, to rise up before us into His glory,—we hoping that by standing on a grain of dust or two of human knowledge higher than our fellows, we may behold the Creator as He rises,—God takes us at our word; He rises, into His own invisible and inconceivable majesty; He goes forth upon the ways which are not our ways, and retires into the thoughts which are not our thoughts; and we are left alone. And presently we say in our vain hearts, "There is no God."

§ 8. I would desire, therefore, to receive God's account of His own creation as under the ordinary limits of human knowledge and imagination it would be received by a simply minded man; and finding that the "heavens and the earth" are spoken of always as having something like equal relation to each other ("thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them"), I reject at once all idea of the term "Heavens" being intended to signify the infinity of space inhabited by countless worlds; for between those infinite heavens and the particle of sand, which not the earth only, but the sun itself, with all the solar system, is in relation to them, no relation of equality or comparison could be inferred. But I suppose the heavens to mean that part of creation which holds equal companionship with our globe; I understand the "rolling of those heavens together as a

scroll" to be an equal and relative destruction with the "melting of the elements in fervent heat;" * and I understand the making the firmament to signify that, so far as man is concerned, most magnificent ordinance of the clouds;—the ordinance, that as the great plain of waters was formed on the face of the earth, so also a plain of waters should be stretched along the height of air, and the face of the cloud answer the face of the ocean; and that this upper and heavenly plain should be of waters, as it were, glorified in their nature, no longer quenching the fire, but now bearing fire in their own bosoms; no longer murmuring only when the winds raise them or rocks divide, but answering each other with their own voices from pole to pole; no longer restrained by established shores, and guided through unchanging channels, but going forth at their pleasure like the armies of the angels, and choosing their encampments upon the heights of the hills; no longer hurried downwards forever, moving but to fall, nor lost in lightless accumulation of the abyss, but covering the east and west with the waving of their wings, and robing the gloom of the farther infinite with a vesture of divers colors, of which

* Compare also Job xxxvi. 29, "The spreading of the clouds, and the noise of his *tabernacle;*" and xxxviii. 33, "Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth? canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds?"

Observe that in the passage of Addison's well-known hymn—

> "The spacious firmament on high,
> With all the blue ethereal sky,
> And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
> Their great Original proclaim"—

the writer has clearly the true distinctions in his mind; he does not use his words, as we too often accept them, in vain tautology. By the *spacious* firmament he means the clouds, using the word spacious to mark the true meaning of the Hebrew term: the blue *ethereal* sky is the real air or ether, blue above the clouds; the heavens are the starry space, for which he uses this word, less accurately, indeed, than the others, but as the only one available for this meaning.

the threads are purple and scarlet, and the embroideries flame.

§ 9. This, I believe, is the ordinance of the firmament; and it seems to me that in the midst of the material nearness of these heavens God means us to acknowledge His own immediate presence as visiting, judging, and blessing us. "The earth shook, the heavens also dropped, at the presence of God." "He doth set His bow in the cloud," and thus renews, in the sound of every drooping swathe of rain, his promises of everlasting love. "In them hath he set a *tabernacle* for the sun;" whose burning ball, which without the firmament would be seen as an intolerable and scorching circle in the blackness of vacuity, is by that firmament surrounded with gorgeous service, and tempered by mediatorial ministries; by the firmament of clouds the golden pavement is spread for his chariot wheels at morning; by the firmament of clouds the temple is built for his presence to fill with light at noon; by the firmament of clouds the purple veil is closed at evening round the sanctuary of his rest; by the mists of the firmament his implacable light is divided, and its separated fierceness appeased into the soft blue that fills the depth of distance with its bloom, and the flush with which the mountains burn as they drink the overflowing of the dayspring. And in this tabernacling of the unendurable sun with men, through the shadows of the firmament, God would seem to set forth the stooping of His own majesty to men, upon the *throne* of the firmament. As the Creator of all the worlds, and the Inhabiter of eternity, we cannot behold Him; but, as the Judge of the earth and the Preserver of men, those heavens are indeed His dwelling-place. "Swear not, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool." And all those passings to and fro of fruitful shower and grateful shade, and all those visions

of silver palaces built about the horizon, and voices of moaning winds and threatening thunders, and glories of colored robe and cloven ray, are but to deepen in our hearts the acceptance, and distinctness, and dearness of the simple words, "Our Father which art in heaven."

CHAPTER VII.

THE DRY LAND.

§ 1. Having thus arrived at some apprehension of the true meaning and noble offices of the clouds, we leave farther inquiry into their aspects to another time, and follow the fixed arrangement of our subject; first, to the crests of the mountains. Of these also, having seen in our review of ancient and modern landscape various strange differences in the way men looked upon them, it will be well in the outset to ascertain, as far as may be, the true meaning and office.

The words which marked for us the purpose of the clouds are followed immediately by those notable ones:—

"And God said, Let the waters which are under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear."

We do not, perhaps, often enough consider the deep significance of this sentence. We are too apt to receive it as the description of an event vaster only in its extent, not in its nature, than the compelling the Red Sea to draw back, that Israel might pass by. We imagine the Deity in like manner rolling the waves of the greater ocean together on a heap, and setting bars and doors to them eternally.

But there is a far deeper meaning than this in the solemn words of Genesis, and in the correspondent verse of the Psalm, "His hands prepared the dry land." Up to that moment the earth had been *void*, for it had been

without form. The command that the waters should be gathered was the command that the earth should be *sculptured.* The sea was not driven to his place in suddenly restrained rebellion, but withdrawn to his place in perfect and patient obedience. The dry land appeared, not in level sands, forsaken by the surges, which those surges might again claim for their own; but in range beyond range of swelling hill and iron rock, forever to claim kindred with the firmament, and be companioned by the clouds of heaven.

§ 2. What space of time was in reality occupied by the "day" of Genesis, is not, at present, of any importance for us to consider. By what furnaces of fire the adamant was melted, and by what wheels of earthquake it was torn, and by what teeth of glacier and weight of sea-waves it was engraven and finished into its perfect form, we may perhaps hereafter endeavor to conjecture; but here, as in few words the work is summed by the historian, so in few broad thoughts it should be comprehended by us; and as we read the mighty sentence, "Let the dry land appear," we should try to follow the finger of God, as it engraved upon the stone tables of the earth the letters and the law of its everlasting form; as, gulf by gulf, the channels of the deep were ploughed; and cape by cape, the lines were traced, with Divine foreknowledge, of the shores that were to limit the nations; and chain by chain, the mountain walls were lengthened forth, and their foundations fastened forever; and the compass was set upon the face of the depth, and the fields, and the highest part of the dust of the world were made; and the right hand of Christ first strewed the snow on Lebanon, and smoothed the slopes of Calvary.

§ 3. It is not, I repeat, always needful, in many respects it is not possible, to conjecture the manner, or the time, in which this work was done; but it is deeply

necessary for all men to consider the magnificence of the accomplished purpose, and the depth of the wisdom and love which are manifested in the ordinances of the hills. For observe, in order to bring the world into the form which it now bears, it was not mere *sculpture* that was needed; the mountains could not stand for a day unless they were formed of materials altogether different from those which constitute the lower hills, and the surfaces of the valleys. A harder substance had to be prepared for every mountain chain; yet not so hard but that it might be capable of crumbling down into earth fit to nourish the alpine forest and the alpine flower; not so hard but that, in the midst of the utmost majesty of its enthroned strength, there should be seen on it the seal of death, and the writing of the same sentence that had gone forth against the human frame, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return."* And with this perishable substance the most majestic forms were to be framed that were consistent with the safety of man; and the peak was to be lifted, and the cliff rent, as high and as steeply as was possible, in order yet to permit the shepherd to feed his flocks upon the slope, and the cottage to nestle beneath their shadow.

§ 4. And observe, two distinct ends were to be accomplished in the doing this. It was, indeed, absolutely necessary that such eminences should be created, in order to fit the earth in anywise for human habitation; for without mountains the air could not be purified, nor the flowing of the rivers sustained, and the earth must have become for the most part desert plain, or stagnant marsh. But the feeding of the rivers and the purifying of the winds are the least of the ser-

* "Surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place. The waters wear the stones: thou washest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man."—*Job* xiv. 18, 19.

vices appointed to the hills. To fill the thirst of the human heart for the beauty of God's working,—to startle its lethargy with the deep and pure agitation of astonishment,—are their higher missions. They are as a great and noble architecture; first giving shelter, comfort, and rest; and covered also with mighty sculpture and painted legend. It is impossible to examine in their connected system the features of even the most ordinary mountain scenery, without concluding that it has been prepared in order to unite as far as possible, and in the closest compass, every means of delighting and sanctifying the heart of man. "As far as *possible;*" that is, as far as is consistent with the fulfilment of the sentence of condemnation on the whole earth. Death must be upon the hills; and the cruelty of the tempests smite them, and the brier and thorn spring up upon them: but they so smite, as to bring their rocks into the fairest forms; and so spring, as to make the very desert blossom as the rose. Even among our own hills of Scotland and Cumberland, though often too barren to be perfectly beautiful, and always too low to be perfectly sublime, it is strange how many deep sources of delight are gathered into the compass of their glens and vales; and how, down to the most secret cluster of their far-away flowers, and the idlest leap of their straying streamlets, the whole heart of Nature seems thirsting to give, and still to give, shedding forth her everlasting beneficence with a profusion so patient, so passionate, that our utmost observance and thankfulness are but, at last, neglect of her nobleness, and apathy to her love. But among the true mountains of the greater orders the Divine purpose of appeal at once to all the faculties of the human spirit becomes still more manifest. Inferior hills ordinarily interrupt, in some degree, the richness of the valleys at their feet; the gray downs of Southern England, and treeless co-

teaux of Central France, and gray swells of Scottish moor, whatever peculiar charm they may possess in themselves, are at least destitute of those which belong to the woods and fields of the lowlands. But the great mountains *lift* the lowlands *on their sides.* Let the reader imagine, first, the appearance of the most varied plain of some richly cultivated country; let him imagine it dark with graceful woods, and soft with deepest pastures; let him fill the space of it, to the utmost horizon, with innumerable and changeful incidents of scenery and life; leading pleasant streamlets through its meadows, strewing clusters of cottages beside their banks, tracing sweet footpaths through its avenues, and animating its fields with happy flocks, and slow wandering spots of cattle; and when he has wearied himself with endless imagining, and left no space without some loveliness of its own, let him conceive all this great plain, with its infinite treasures of natural beauty and happy human life, gathered up in God's hands from one edge of the horizon to the other like a woven garment; and shaken into deep, falling folds, as the robes droop from a king's shoulders; all its bright rivers leaping into cataracts along the hollows of its fall, and all its forests rearing themselves aslant against its slopes, as a rider rears himself back when his horse plunges; and all its villages nestling themselves into the new windings of its glens; and all its pastures thrown into steep waves of greensward, dashed with dew along the edges of their folds, and sweeping down into endless slopes, with a cloud here and there lying quietly, half on the grass, half in the air; and he will have as yet, in all this lifted world, only the foundation of one of the great Alps. And whatever is lovely in the lowland scenery becomes lovelier in this change: the trees which grew heavily and stiffly from the level line of plain assume strange curves of strength and grace as they bend them-

selves against the mountain-side; they breathe more freely, and toss their branches more carelessly as each climbs higher, looking to the clear light above the topmost leaves of its brother tree: the flowers which on the arable plain fell before the plough, now find out for themselves unapproachable places, where year by year they gather into happier fellowship, and fear no evil; and the streams which in the level land crept in dark eddies by unwholesome banks, now move in showers of silver, and are clothed with rainbows, and bring health and life wherever the glance of their waves can reach.

§ 5. And although this beauty seems at first, in its wildness, inconsistent with the service of man, it is, in fact, more necessary to his happy existence than all the level and easily subdued land which he rejoices to possess. It seems almost an insult to the reader's intelligence to ask him to dwell (as if they could be doubted) on the *uses* of the hills; and yet so little, until lately, have those uses been understood, that, in the seventeenth century, one of the most enlightened of the religious men of his day (Fleming), himself a native of a mountain country, casting about for some reason to explain to himself the existence of mountains, and prove their harmony with the general perfectness of the providential government of creation, can light upon this reason only, "They are inhabited by the beasts."

§ 6. It may not, therefore, even at this day, be altogether profitless or unnecessary to review briefly the nature of the three great offices which mountain ranges are appointed to fulfil, in order to preserve the health, and increase the happiness of mankind. Their first use is of course to give motion to water. Every fountain and river, from the inch-deep streamlet that crosses the village lane in trembling clearness, to the massy and silent march of the everlasting multitude of waters in Amazon

First use of mountains. To give motion to water.

or Ganges, owe their play, and purity, and power, to the ordained elevations of the earth. Gentle or steep, extended or abrupt, some determined slope of the earth's surface is of course necessary, before any wave can so much as overtake one sedge in its pilgrimage; and how seldom do we enough consider, as we walk beside the margins of our pleasant brooks, how beautiful and wonderful is that ordinance, of which every blade of grass that waves in their clear water is a perpetual sign; that the dew and rain fallen on the face of the earth shall find no resting-place; shall find, on the contrary, fixed channels traced for them, from the ravines of the central crests down which they roar in sudden ranks of foam, to the dark hollows beneath the banks of lowland pasture, round which they must circle slowly among the stems and beneath the leaves of the lilies; paths prepared for them, by which, at some appointed rate of journey, they must evermore descend, sometimes slow and sometimes swift, but never pausing; the daily portion of the earth they have to glide over marked for them at each successive sunrise, the place which has known them knowing them no more, and the gateways of guarding mountains opened for them in cleft and chasm, none letting them in their pilgrimage; and, from far off, the great heart of the sea calling them to itself! Deep calleth unto deep. I know not which of the two is the more wonderful,—that calm, gradated, invisible slope of the champaign land, which gives motion to the stream; or that passage cloven for it through the ranks of hill, which, necessary for the health of the land immediately around them, would yet, unless so supernaturally divided, have fatally intercepted the flow of the waters from far-off countries. When did the great spirit of the river first knock at those adamantine gates? When did the porter open to it, and cast his keys away forever, lapped in whirling sand? I am not satisfied—no one should be satisfied—

with that vague answer,—the river cuts its way. Not so. The river *found* its way. I do not see that rivers, in their own strength, can do much in cutting their way; they are nearly as apt to choke their channels up, as to carve them out. Only give a river some little sudden power in a valley, and see how it will use it. Cut itself a bed? Not so, by any means, but fill up its bed, and look for another, in a wild, dissatisfied, inconsistent manner. Any way, rather than the old one, will better please it; and even if it is banked up and forced to keep to the old one, it will not deepen, but do all it can to raise it, and leap out of it. And although, wherever water has a steep fall, it will swiftly cut itself a bed deep into the rock or ground, it will not, when the rock is hard, cut a wider channel than it actually needs; so that if the existing river beds, through ranges of mountain, had in reality been cut by the streams, they would be found, wherever the rocks are hard, only in the form of narrow and profound ravines,—like the well-known channel of the Niagara, below the fall; not in that of extended valleys. And the actual work of true mountain rivers, though often much greater in proportion to their body of water than that of the Niagara, is quite insignificant when compared with the area and depth of the valleys through which they flow; so that, although in many cases it appears that those larger valleys have been excavated at earlier periods by more powerful streams, or by the existing stream in a more powerful condition, still the great fact remains always equally plain, and equally admirable, that, whatever the nature and duration of the agencies employed, the earth was so shaped at first as to direct the currents of its rivers in the manner most healthy and convenient for man. The valley of the Rhone may, though it is not likely, have been in great part excavated in early time by torrents a thousand times larger than the Rhone; but it could not

have been excavated at all, unless the mountains had been thrown at first into two chains, between which the torrents were set to work in a given direction. And it is easy to conceive how, under any less beneficent dispositions of their masses of hill, the continents of the earth might either have been covered with enormous lakes, as parts of North America actually are covered; or have become wildernesses of pestiferous marsh; or lifeless plains, upon which the water would have dried as it fell, leaving them for great part of the year desert. Such districts do exist, and exist in vastness: the *whole* earth is not prepared for the habitation of man; only certain small portions are prepared for him,—the houses, as it were, of the human race, from which they are to look abroad upon the rest of the world, not to wonder or complain that it is not all house, but to be grateful for the kindness of the admirable building, in the house itself, as compared with the rest. It would be as absurd to think it an evil that all the world is not fit for us to inhabit, as to think it an evil that the globe is no larger than it is. As much as we shall ever need is evidently assigned to us for our dwelling-place; the rest, covered with rolling waves or drifting sands, fretted with ice, or crested with fire, is set before us for contemplation in an uninhabitable magnificence; and that part which we are enabled to inhabit owes its fitness for human life chiefly to its mountain ranges, which, throwing the superfluous rain off as it falls, collect it in streams or lakes, and guide it into given places, and in given directions; so that men can build their cities in the midst of fields which they know will be always fertile, and establish the lines of their commerce upon streams which will not fail.

§ 7. Nor is this giving of motion to water to be considered as confined only to the surface of the earth. A no less important function of the hills is in directing

the flow of the fountains and springs, from subterranean reservoirs. There is no miraculous springing up of water out of the ground at our feet; but every fountain and well is supplied from a reservoir among the hills, so placed as to involve some slight fall or pressure, enough to secure the constant flowing of the stream. And the incalculable blessing of the power given to us in most valleys, of reaching by excavation some point whence the water will rise to the surface of the ground in perennial flow, is entirely owing to the concave disposition of the beds of clay or rock raised from beneath the bosom of the valley into ranks of enclosing hills.

§ 8. The second great use of mountains is to maintain a constant change in the currents and nature of the *air*. Such change would, of course, have been partly caused by differences in soils and vegetation, even if the earth had been level; but to a far less extent than it is now by the chains of hills, which exposing on one side their masses of rock to the full heat of the sun (increased by the angle at which the rays strike on the slope), and on the other casting a soft shadow for leagues over the plains at their feet, divide the earth not only into districts, but into climates, and cause perpetual currents of air to traverse their passes, and ascend or descend their ravines, altering both the temperature and nature of the air as it passes, in a thousand different ways; moistening it with the spray of their waterfalls, sucking it down and beating it hither and thither in the pools of their torrents, closing it within clefts and caves, where the sunbeams never reach, till it is as cold as November mists, then sending it forth again to breathe softly across the slopes of velvet fields, or to be scorched among sunburnt shales and grassless crags; then drawing it back in moaning swirls through clefts of ice, and up into dewy wreaths above the snowfields; then piercing it with strange electric darts and

Second use. To give motion to air.

flashes of mountain fire, and tossing it high in fantastic storm-cloud, as the dried grass is tossed by the mower, only suffering it to depart at last, when chastened and pure, to refresh the faded air of the far-off plains.

§ 9. The third great use of mountains is to cause perpetual change in the *soils* of the earth. Without such provisions the ground under cultivation would in a series of years become exhausted and require to be upturned laboriously by the hand of man. But the elevations of the earth's surface provide for it a perpetual renovation. The higher mountains suffer their summits to be broken into fragments and to be cast down in sheets of massy rock, full, as we shall see presently, of every substance necessary for the nourishment of plants: these fallen fragments are again broken by frost, and ground by torrents, into various conditions of sand and clay—materials which are distributed perpetually by the streams farther and farther from the mountain's base. Every shower which swells the rivulets enables their waters to carry certain portions of earth into new positions, and exposes new banks of ground to be mined in their turn. That turbid foaming of the angry water,—that tearing down of bank and rock along the flanks of its fury,—are no disturbances of the kind course of nature; they are beneficent operations of laws necessary to the existence of man and to the beauty of the earth. The process is continued more gently, but not less effectively, over all the surface of the lower undulating country; and each filtering thread of summer rain which trickles through the short turf of the uplands is bearing its own appointed burden of earth to be thrown down on some new natural garden in the dingles below.

Third use. To give change to the ground.

And it is not, in reality, a degrading, but a true, large, and ennobling view of the mountain ranges of the world, if we compare them to heaps of fertile and fresh earth,

laid up by a prudent gardener beside his garden beds, whence, at intervals, he casts on them some scattering of new and virgin ground. That which we so often lament as convulsion or destruction is nothing else than the momentary shaking of the dust from the spade. The winter floods, which inflict a temporary devastation, bear with them the elements of succeeding fertility; the fruitful field is covered with sand and shingle in momentary judgment, but in enduring mercy; and the great river, which chokes its mouth with marsh, and tosses terror along its shore, is but scattering the seeds of the harvest of futurity, and preparing the seats of unborn generations.

§ 10. I have not spoken of the local and peculiar utilities of mountains: I do not count the benefit of the supply of summer streams from the moors of the higher ranges, — of the various medicinal plants which are nested among their rocks, — of the delicate pasturage which they furnish for cattle,* — of the forests in which they bear timber for shipping,—the stones they supply for building, or the ores of metal which they collect into spots open to discovery, and easy for working. All these benefits are of a secondary or a limited nature. But the three great functions which I have just described,—those of giving motion and change to water, air, and earth,—are indispensable to human existence; they are operations to be regarded with as full a depth of gratitude as the laws which bid the tree bear fruit, or the seed multiply itself in the earth. And thus those desolate and threatening ranges of dark mountain, which, in nearly all ages of the world, men have looked upon with aversion or with terror, and shrunk back from as if they were haunted by perpetual images of death, are, in reality, sources of life and happiness far fuller and more benefi-

* The *highest* pasturages (at least so say the Savoyards) being always the best and richest.

cent than all the bright fruitfulness of the plain. The valleys only feed; the mountains feed, and guard, and strengthen us. We take our idea of fearfulness and sublimity alternately from the mountains and the sea; but we associate them unjustly. The sea wave, with all its beneficence, is yet devouring and terrible; but the silent wave of the blue mountain is lifted toward heaven in a stillness of perpetual mercy; and the one surge, unfathomable in its darkness, the other, unshaken in its faithfulness, forever bear the seal of their appointed symbol:

> "Thy *righteousness* is like the great mountains:
> Thy *judgments* are a great deep."

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE MATERIALS OF MOUNTAINS:—FIRST, COMPACT CRYSTALLINES.

§ 1. In the early days of geological science, the substances which composed the crust of the earth, as far as it could be examined, were supposed to be referable to three distinct classes: the first consisting of rocks which not only supported all the rest, but from which all the rest were derived, therefore called "Primary;" the second class consisting of rocks formed of the broken fragments or altered substance of the primary ones, therefore called "Secondary;" and, thirdly, rocks or earthy deposits formed by the ruins and detritus of both primary and secondary rocks, called, therefore, "Tertiary." This classification was always, in some degree, uncertain; and has been lately superseded by more complicated systems, founded on the character of the fossils contained in the various deposits, and on the circumstances of position, by which their relative ages are more accurately ascertainable. But the original rude classification, though of little, if any, use for scientific purposes, was based on certain broad and conspicuous phenomena, which it brought clearly before the popular mind. In this way it may still be serviceable, and ought, I think, to be permitted to retain its place, as an introduction to systems more defined and authoritative.

§ 2. For the fact is, that in approaching any large mountain range, the ground over which the spectator

passes, if he examine it with any intelligence, will almost always arrange itself in his mind under three great heads. There will be, first, the ground of the plains or valleys he is about to quit, composed of sand, clay, gravel, rolled stones, and variously mingled soils; which, if he has any opportunity,—at the banks of a stream, or the sides of a railway cutting,—to examine to any depth, he will find arranged in beds exactly resembling those of modern sand-banks or sea-beaches, and appearing to have been formed under such natural laws as are in operation daily around us. At the outskirts of the hill district, he may, perhaps, find considerable eminences, formed of these beds of loose gravel and sand; but, as he enters into it farther, he will soon discover the hills to be composed of some harder substance, properly deserving the name of rock, sustaining itself in picturesque forms, and appearing, at first, to owe both its hardness and its outlines to the action of laws such as do not hold at the present day. He can easily explain the nature, and account for the distribution, of the banks which overhang the lowland road, or of the dark earthy deposits which enrich the lowland pasture; but he cannot so distinctly imagine how the limestone hills of Derbyshire and Yorkshire were hardened into their stubborn whiteness, or raised into their cavernous cliffs. Still, if he carefully examines the substance of these more noble rocks, he will, in nine cases out of ten, discover them to be composed of fine calcareous dust, or closely united particles of sand; and will be ready to accept as possible, or even probable, the suggestion of their having been formed, by slow deposit, at the bottom of deep lakes and ancient seas, under such laws of Nature as are still in operation.

§ 3. But, as he advances yet farther into the hill district, he finds the rocks around him assuming a gloomier and more majestic condition. Their tint darkens; their outlines become wild and irregular; and whereas before

they had only appeared at the roadside in narrow ledges among the turf, or glanced out from among the thickets above the brooks in white walls and fantastic towers, they now rear themselves up in solemn and shattered masses far and near; softened, indeed, with strange harmony of clouded colors, but possessing the whole scene with their iron spirit; and rising, in all probability, into eminences as much prouder in actual elevation than those of the intermediate rocks, as more powerful in their influence over every minor feature of the landscape.

§ 4. And when the traveller proceeds to observe closely the materials of which these noble ranges are composed, he finds also a complete change in their internal structure. They are no longer formed of delicate sand or dust—each particle of that dust the same as every other, and the whole mass depending for its hardness merely on their closely cemented unity; but they are now formed of several distinct substances, visibly unlike each other; and not *pressed* but *crystallized* into one mass,—crystallized into a unity far more perfect than that of the dusty limestone, but yet without the least mingling of their several natures with each other. Such a rock, freshly broken, has a spotty, granulated, and, in almost all instances, sparkling, appearance; it requires a much harder blow to break it than the limestone or sandstone; but, when once thoroughly shattered, it is easy to separate from each other the various substances of which it is composed, and to examine them in their individual grains or crystals; of which each variety will be found to have a different degree of hardness, a different shade of color, and a different character of form.

But this examination will not enable the observer to comprehend the method either of their formation or aggregation, at least by any process such as he now sees taking place around him; he will at once be driven to admit that some strange and powerful operation has

taken place upon these rocks, different from any of which he is at present cognizant; and farther inquiry will probably induce him to admit, as more than probable, the supposition that their structure is in great part owing to the action of enormous heat prolonged for indefinite periods.

§ 5. Now, although these three great groups of rocks do indeed often pass into each other by imperceptible gradations, and although their peculiar aspect is never a severe indication of their relative ages, yet their characters are for the most part so defined as to make a strong impression on the mind of an ordinary observer, and their age is also for the most part approximately indicated by their degrees of hardness, and crystalline aspect. It does, indeed, sometimes happen that a soft and slimy clay will pass into a rock like Aberdeen granite by transitions so subtle that no point of separation can be determined; and it very often happens that rocks like Aberdeen granite are of more recent formation than certain beds of sandstone and limestone. But, in spite of all these uncertainties and exceptions, I believe that unless actual pains be taken to efface from the mind its natural impressions, the idea of three great classes of rocks and earth will maintain its ground in the thoughts of the general observer; that whether he desire it or not, he will find himself throwing the soft and loose clays and sands together under one head; placing the hard rocks, of a dull, compact, homogeneous substance, under another head; and the hardest rocks, of a crystalline, glittering, and various substance, under a third head; and having done this, he will also find that, with certain easily admissible exceptions, these three classes of rocks are, in every district which he examines, of three different ages; that the softest are the youngest, the hard and homogeneous ones are older, and the crystalline are the oldest; and he will, perhaps, in the end, find it a somewhat in-

convenient piece of respect to the complexity and accuracy of modern geological science, if he refuse to the three classes, thus defined in his imagination, their ancient title of Tertiary, Secondary, and Primary.

§ 6. But however this may be, there is one lesson evidently intended to be taught by the different characters of these rocks, which we must not allow to escape us. We have to observe, first, the state of perfect powerlessness, and loss of all beauty, exhibited in those beds of earth in which the separated pieces or particles are entirely independent of each other, more especially in the gravel whose pebbles have all been *rolled into one shape:* secondly, the greater degree of permanence, power, and beauty possessed by the rocks whose component atoms have some affection and attraction for each other, though all of one kind; and lastly, the utmost form and highest beauty of the rocks in which the several atoms have all *different shapes, characters, and offices;* but are inseparably united by some fiery process which has purified them all.

It can hardly be necessary to point out how these natural ordinances seem intended to teach us the great truths which are the basis of all political science; how the polishing friction which separates, the affection which binds, and the affliction that fuses and confirms, are accurately symbolized by the processes to which the several ranks of hills appear to owe their present aspect; and how, even if the knowledge of those processes be denied to us, that present aspect may in itself seem no imperfect image of the various states of mankind: first, that which is powerless through total disorganization; secondly, that which, though united, and in some degree powerful, is yet incapable of great effort or result, owing to the too great similarity and confusion of offices, both in ranks and individuals; and finally, the perfect state of brotherhood and strength in which each character is

clearly distinguished, separately perfected, and employed in its proper place and office.

§ 7. I shall not, however, so oppose myself to the views of our leading geologists as to retain here the names of Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary rocks. But as I wish the reader to keep the ideas of the three classes clearly in his mind, I will ask his leave to give them names which involve no theory, and can be liable, therefore, to no great objections. We will call the hard, and (generally) central, masses Crystalline Rocks, because they almost always present an appearance of crystallization. The less hard substances, which appear compact and homogeneous, we will call Coherent Rocks, and for the scattered débris we will use the general term Diluvium.

§ 8. All these substances agree in one character, that of being more or less soft and destructible. One material, indeed, which enters largely into the composition of most of them, flint, is harder than iron; but even this, their chief source of strength, is easily broken by a sudden blow; and it is so combined in the large rocks with softer substances, that time and the violence of the weather invariably produce certain destructive effects on their masses. Some of them become soft and moulder away; others break, little by little, into angular fragments or slaty sheets; but all yield in some way or other; and the problem to be solved in every mountain range appears to be, that under these conditions of decay, the cliffs and peaks may be raised as high, and thrown into as noble forms, as is possible, consistently with an effective, though nor perfect permanence, and a general, though not absolute security.

§ 9. Perfect permanence and absolute security were evidently in nowise intended.* It would have been as

* I am well aware that to the minds of many persons nothing bears a greater appearance of presumption than any attempt at reasoning

easy for the Creator to have made mountains of steel as of granite, of adamant as of lime; but this was clearly no part of the Divine counsels: mountains were to be destructible and frail; to melt under the soft lambency of the streamlet; to shiver before the subtle wedge of the frost; to wither with untraceable decay in their own substance; and yet, under all these conditions of destruction, to be maintained in magnificent eminence before the eyes of men.

Nor is it in anywise difficult for us to perceive the beneficent reasons for this appointed frailness of the mountains. They appear to be threefold: the first, and the most important, that successive soils might be supplied to the plains, in the manner explained in the last chapter, and that men might be furnished with a material for their works of architecture and sculpture, at once soft enough to be subdued, and hard enough to be preserved; the second, that some sense of danger might always be connected with the most precipitous forms, and thus increase their sublimity; and the third, that a subject of perpetual interest might be opened to the human mind in observing the changes of form brought about by time on these monuments of creation.

In order, therefore, to understand the method in which these various substances break, so as to produce the forms which are of chief importance in landscape,

respecting the purposes of the Divine Being; and that in many cases it would be thought more consistent with the modesty of humanity to limit its endeavor to the ascertaining of physical causes than to form conjectures respecting Divine intentions. But I believe this feeling to be false and dangerous. Wisdom can only be demonstrated in its ends, and goodness only perceived in its motives. He who in a morbid modesty supposes that he is incapable of apprehending any of the purposes of God, renders himself also incapable of witnessing his wisdom; and he who supposes that favors may be bestowed without intention, will soon learn to receive them without gratitude.

as well as the exquisite adaptation of all their qualities to the service of men, it will be well that I should take some note of them in their order; not with any mineralogical accuracy, but with care enough to enable me hereafter to explain, without obscurity, any phenomena dependent upon such peculiarities of substance.

§ 10. 1st. CRYSTALLINE ROCKS.—In saying, above, that the hardest rocks generally presented an appearance of "crystallization," I meant a glittering or granulated look, somewhat like that of a coarse piece of freshly broken loaf sugar.

1. CRYSTALLINE ROCKS.

But this appearance may also exist in rocks of uniform and softer substance, such as statuary marble, of which freshly broken pieces, put into a sugar-basin, cannot be distinguished by the eye from the real sugar. Such rocks are truly crystalline in structure; but the group to which I wish to limit the term "crystalline," is not only thus granulated and glittering, but is always composed of at least two, usually three or four, substances, intimately mingled with each other in the form of small grains or crystals, and giving the rock a more or less speckled or mottled look, according to the size of the crystals and their variety of color. It is a law of nature, that whenever rocks are to be employed on hard service, and for great purposes, they shall be thus composed. And there appear to be two distinct providential reasons for this.

Are always Compound.

§ 11. The first, that these crystalline rocks being, as we saw above, generally the oldest and highest, it is from them that other soils of various kinds must be derived; and they were therefore made a kind of storehouse, from which, wherever they were found, all kinds of treasures could be developed necessary for the service of man and other living creatures. Thus the granite of Mont Blanc is a crystalline rock composed of four substances; and in these four substances are contained

the elements of nearly all kinds of sandstone and clay, together with potash, magnesia, and the metals of iron and manganese. Wherever the smallest portion of this rock occurs, a certain quantity of each of these substances may be derived from it, and the plants and animals which require them sustained in health.

The second reason appears to be that rocks composed in this manner are capable of more interesting variety in form than any others; and as they were continually to be exposed to sight in the high ranges, they were so prepared as to be always as interesting and beautiful as possible.

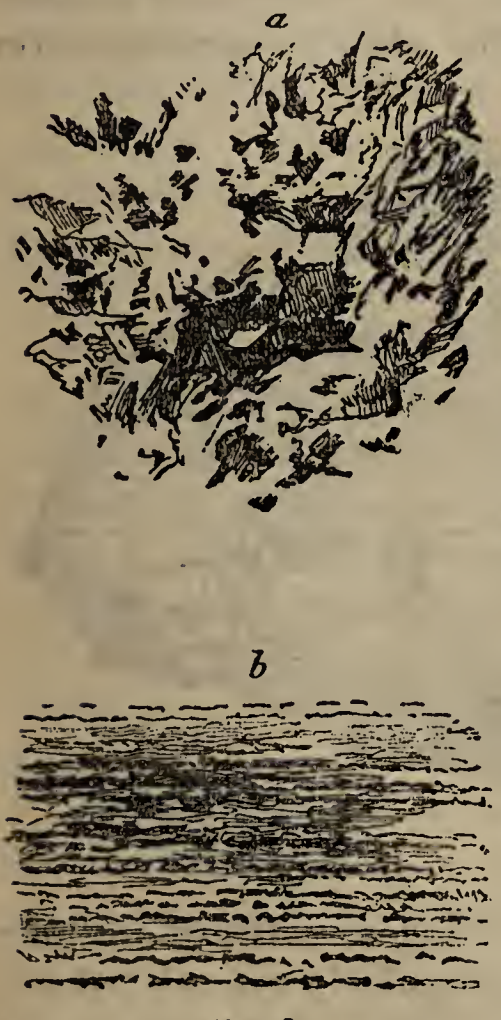


FIG. 3.

§ 12. These crystalline or spotted rocks we must again separate into two great classes, according to the arrangement, in them, of the particles of a substance called mica. It is not present in all of them; but when it occurs, it is usually in large quantities, and a notable source of character. It varies in color, occurring white, brown, green, red, and black; and in aspect, from shining plates to small dark grains, even these grains being seen, under a magnifier, to be composed of little plates, like pieces of exceedingly thin glass; but with this great difference from glass, that, whether large or small, the plates will not easily break *across*, but are elastic, and capable of being bent into a considerable curve; only if pressed with a

And divisible into two classes, Compact Crystallines and Slaty Crystallines.

knife upon the edge, they will separate into any number of thinner plates, more and more elastic and flexible according to their thinness, and these again into others still finer; there seeming to be no limit to the possible subdivision but the coarseness of the instrument employed.

§ 13. Now, when these crystals or grains, represented by the black spots and lines in Fig. 3, lie as they do at *a* in that figure, in all directions, cast hither and thither among the other materials of the stone,—sometimes on

FIG. 4.

their faces, sometimes on their sides, sometimes on their edges,—they give the rock an irregularly granulated appearance and structure, so that it will break with equal ease in any direction; but if these crystals lie all one way, with their sides parallel, as at *b*, they give the rock a striped or slaty look, and it will most readily break in the direction in which they lie, separating itself into folia or plates, more or less distinctly according to the quantity of mica in its mass. In the example Fig. 4, a piece of rock from the top of Mont Breven, there are very

few of them, and the material with which they are surrounded is so hard and compact that the whole mass breaks irregularly, like a solid flint, beneath the hammer; but the plates of mica nevertheless influence the fracture on a large scale, and occasion, as we shall see hereafter, the peculiar form of the precipice at the summit of the mountain.*

The rocks which are destitute of mica, or in which the mica lies irregularly, or in which it is altogether absent, I shall call Compact Crystallines. The rocks in which the mica lies regularly I shall call Slaty Crystallines.

§ 14. 1st. Compact Crystallines.—Under this head are embraced the large group of the granites, syenites, and porphyries,—rocks which all agree in the following particulars:— COMPACT CRYSTALLINES.

A. Variety of color.—The method of their composition out of different substances necessitates their being all more or less spotted or dashed with various colors; there being generally a prevalent ground color, with other subordinate hues broken over it, forming, for the most part, tones of silver gray, of warm, but subdued red, or purple. Now, there is in this a very marvellous provision for the beauty of the central ranges. Other rocks, placed lower among the hills, receive color upon their surfaces from all kinds of minute vegetation; but these higher and more exposed rocks are liable to be in many parts barren; and the wild forms into which they are thrown necessitate their being often freshly broken, so as to bring their pure color, untempered in anywise, frankly into sight. Hence it is appointed that this color shall not be raw or monotonous, but composed—as all beautiful color must be composed—by mingling of many hues in one. Not that there is any aim at *attractive* beauty

Their first characteristic. *Speckledness.*

* See Appendix 2. Slaty Cleavage.

in these rocks; they are intended to constitute solemn and desolate scenes; and there is nothing delicately or variously disposed in their colors. Such beauty would have been inconsistent with their expression of power and terror, and it is reserved for the marbles and other rocks of inferior office. But their color is grave and perfect, closely resembling, in many cases, the sort of hue reached by cross-checkering in the ground of fourteenth-century manuscripts, and peculiarly calculated for distant effects of light; being, for the most part, slightly warm in tone, so as to receive with full advantage the red and orange rays of sunlight. This warmth is almost always farther aided by a glowing orange color, derived from the decomposition of the iron which, though in small quantity, usually is an essential element in them: the orange hue forms itself in unequal veins and spots upon the surfaces which have been long exposed, more or less darkening them; and a very minute black lichen,—so minute as to look almost like spots of dark paint,—a little opposed and warmed by the golden Lichen geographicus, still farther subdues the paler hues of the highest granite rocks. Now, when a surface of this kind is removed to a distance of four or five miles, and seen under warm light through soft air, the orange becomes russet, more or less inclining to pure red, according to the power of the rays: but the black of the lichen becomes pure dark blue; and the result of their combination is that peculiar reddish purple which is so strikingly the characteristic of the rocks of the higher Alps. Most of the travellers who have seen the Valley of Chamouni carry away a strong impression that its upper precipices are of red rock. But they are, without exception, of a whitish gray, toned and raised by this united operation of the iron, the lichen, and the light.

§ 15. I have never had an opportunity of studying the effects of these tones upon rocks of porphyry; but the

beautiful color of that rock in its interior substance has rendered it one of the favorite materials of the architects of all ages, in their most costly work. Not that all porphyry is purple; there are green and white porphyries, as there are yellow and white roses; but the first idea of a porphyry rock is that it shall be purple,—just as the first idea of a rose is that it shall be red. The purple inclines always towards russet* rather than blue, and is subdued by small spots of gray or white. This speckled character, common to all the crystalline rocks, fits them, in art, for large and majestic work; it unfits them for delicate sculpture; and their second universal characteristic is altogether in harmony with this consequence of their first.

§ 16. This second characteristic is a tough hardness, not a brittle hardness, like that of glass or flint, which will splinter violently at a blow in the most unexpected directions; but a grave hardness, which will bear many blows before it yields, and when it is forced to yield at last, will do so, as it were, in a serious and thoughtful way, nor spitefully, nor uselessly, nor irregularly, but in the direction in which it is wanted, and where the force of the blow is directed—there, and there only. A flint which

Their second characteristic. *Toughness.*

* As we had to complain of Dante for not enough noticing the colors of rocks in wild nature, let us do him the justice to refer to his noble symbolic use of their colors when seen in the hewn block.

> "The lowest stair was marble white, so smooth
> And polished that therein my mirrored form
> Distinct I saw. The next of hue more dark
> Than sablest grain, a rough and singëd block,
> Cracked lengthwise and across. The third, that lay
> Massy above, seemed porphyry, that flamed
> Red as the life-blood spouting from a vein."

This stair is at the gate of Purgatory. The white step means sincerity of conscience; the black, contrition; the purple (I believe), pardon by the Atonement.

receives a shock stronger than it can bear, gives up everything at once, and flies into a quantity of pieces, each piece full of flaws. But a piece of granite seems to say to itself, very solemnly: "If these people are resolved to split me into two pieces, that is no reason why I should split myself into three. I will keep together as well as I can, and as long as I can; and if I must fall to dust at last, it shall be slowly and honorably; not in a fit of fury." The importance of this character, in fitting the rock for human uses, cannot be exaggerated: it is essential to such uses that it should be hard, for otherwise it could not bear enormous weights without being crushed; and if, in addition to this hardness, it had been brittle, like glass, it could not have been employed except in the rudest way, as flints are in Kentish walls. But now it is possible to cut a block of granite out of its quarry to exactly the size we want; and that with perfect ease, without gunpowder, or any help but that of a few small iron wedges, a chisel, and a heavy hammer. A single workman can detach a mass fifteen or twenty feet long, by merely drilling a row of holes, a couple of inches deep, and three or four inches apart, along the surface, in the direction in which he wishes to split the rock, and then inserting wedges into each of these holes, and striking them, consecutively, with small, light, repeated blows along the whole row. The granite rends, at last, along the line, quite evenly, requiring very little chiselling afterwards to give the block a smooth face.

§ 17. This after-chiselling, however, is necessarily tedious work, and therefore that condition of speckled color, which is beautiful if exhibited in broad masses, but offensive in delicate forms, exactly falls in with the conditions of *possible* sculpture. Not only is it more laborious to carve granite delicately, than a softer rock; but it is physically impossible to bring it into certain

refinements of form. It cannot be scraped and touched into contours, as marble can; it must be struck hard, or it will not yield at all; and to strike a delicate and detached form hard, is to break it. The detached fingers of a delicate hand, for instance, cannot, as far as I know, be cut in granite. The smallest portion could not be removed from them without a strength of blow which would break off the finger. Hence the sculptor of granite is forced to confine himself to, and to seek for, certain types of form capable of expression in his material; he is naturally driven to make his figures simple in surface, and colossal in size, that they may bear his blows; and this simplicity and magnitude are exactly the characters necessary to show the granitic or porphyritic color to the best advantage. And thus we are guided, almost forced, by the laws of nature, to do right in art. Had granite been white, and marble speckled (and why should this not have been, but by the definite Divine appointment for the good of man?), the huge figures of the Egyptian would have been as oppressive to the sight as cliffs of snow, and the Venus de Medicis would have looked like some exquisitely graceful species of frog.

§ 18. The third universal characteristic of these rocks is their decomposition into the purest sand and clay. Some of them decompose spontaneously, though slowly, on exposure to weather; the greater number only after being mechanically pulverized; but the sand and clay to which by one or the other process they are reducible, are both remarkable for their purity. The clay is the finest and best that can be found for porcelain; the sand often of the purest white, always lustrous and bright in its particles. The result of this law is a peculiar aspect of purity in the landscape composed of such rocks. It cannot become muddy, or foul, or unwholesome. The streams which descend

Their third characteristic. *Purity in decomposition.*

through it may indeed be opaque, and as white as cream with the churned substance of the granite; but their water, after this substance has been thrown down, is good and pure, and their shores are not slimy or treacherous, but of pebbles, or of firm and sparkling sand. The quiet streams, springs, and lakes are always of exquisite clearness, and the sea which washes a granite coast is as unsullied as a flawless emerald. It is remarkable to what extent this intense purity in the country seems to influence the character of its inhabitants. It is almost impossible to make a cottage built in a granite country look absolutely miserable. Rough it may be,—neglected, cold, full of aspect of hardship,—but it never can look *foul;* no matter how carelessly, how indolently, its inhabitants may live, the water at their doors will not stagnate, the soil beneath their feet will not allow itself to be trodden into slime, the timbers of their fences will not rot, they cannot so much as dirty their faces or hands if they try; do the worst they can, there will still be a feeling of firm ground under them, and pure air about them, and an inherent wholesomeness in their abodes which it will need the misery of years to conquer. And, as far as I remember, the inhabitants of granite countries have always a force and healthiness of character, more or less abated or modified, of course, according to the other circumstances of their life, but still definitely belonging to them, as distinguished from the inhabitants of the less pure districts of the hills.

These, then, are the principal characters of the compact crystallines, regarded in their minor or detached masses. Of the peculiar forms which they assume we shall have to speak presently; meantime, retaining these general ideas touching their nature and substance, let us proceed to examine, in the same point of view, the neighboring group of slaty crystallines.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE MATERIALS OF MOUNTAINS:—SECONDLY, SLATY CRYSTALLINES.

§ 1. It will be remembered that we said in the last chapter (§ 4) that one of the notable characters of the whole group of the crystallines was the incomprehensibility of the processes which have brought them to their actual state. This however is more peculiarly true of the slaty crystallines. It is perfectly possible, by many processes of chemistry, to produce masses of irregular crystals which, though not of the substance of granite, are very like it in their mode of arrangement. But, as far as I am aware, it is impossible to produce artificially anything resembling the structure of the slaty crystallines. And the more I have examined the rocks themselves, the more I have felt at once the difficulty of explaining the method of their formation, and the growing interest of inquiries respecting that method. The facts (and I can venture to give nothing more than facts) are briefly these:—

§ 2. The mineral called mica, described in the course of the last chapter, is closely connected with another, differing from it in containing a considerable quantity of magnesia. This associated mineral, called chlorite, is of a dull greenish color, and opaque, while the mica is, in thin plates, more or less translucent; and the chlorite is apt to occur more in the form of a green earth, or green dust, than of finely divided plates. The

original quantity of magnesia in the rock determines how far the mica shall give place to chlorite; and in the intermediate conditions of rock we find a black and nearly opaque mica, containing a good deal of magnesia, together with a chlorite, which at first seems mixed with small plates of true mica, or is itself formed of minute plates or spangles, and then, as the quantity of magnesia increases, assumes its proper form of a dark green earth.

§ 3. By this appointment there is obtained a series of materials by which the appearance of the rock may be varied to almost any extent. From plates of brilliant

FIG. 5.

white mica half a foot broad, flashing in the sun like panes of glass, to a minute film of dark green dust hardly traceable by the eye, an infinite range of conditions is found in the different groups of rocks; but always under this general law, that, for the most part, the compact crystallines present the purest and boldest plates of mica; and the tendency to pass into slaty crystallines is commonly accompanied by the change of the whiteness of the mica to a dark or black color, indicating (I believe) the presence of magnesia, and by the gradual intermingling with it of chloritic earth; or else of a cog-

nate mineral (differing from chlorite in containing a quantity of lime) called hornblende.

Such, at least, is eminently the case in the Alps; and in the account I have to give of their slaty crystallines, it must be understood that in using the word "mica" generally, I mean the more obscure conditions of the mineral, associated with chlorite and hornblende.

§ 4. Now it is quite easy to understand how, in the compact crystallines, the various elements of the rock, separating from each other as they congealed from their fluid state, whether of watery solution or fiery fusion,

Fig. 6.

might arrange themselves in irregular grains as at *a* in Fig. 3, p. 143. Such an arrangement constantly takes place before our eyes in volcanic rocks as they cool. But it is not at all easy to understand how the white, hard, and comparatively heavy substances should throw themselves into knots and bands in one definite direction, and the delicate films of mica should undulate about and between them, as in Fig. 5 on page 152, like rivers among islands, pursuing, however, on the whole, a straight course across the mass of rock. If it could be shown that such pieces of stone had been formed in the

horizontal position in which I have drawn the one in the figure, the structure would be somewhat intelligible as the result of settlement. But, on the contrary, the lines of such foliated rocks hardly ever are horizontal; neither can distinct evidence be found of their at any time having been so. The evidence, on the contrary, is often strongly in favor of their having been formed in the highly inclined directions in which they now occur, such as that of the piece in Fig. 7, p. 155.*

§ 5. Such, however, is the simple fact, that when the compact crystallines are about to pass into slaty crystallines, their mica throws itself into these bands and zones, undulating around knots of the other substances which compose the rock. Gradually the knots diminish in size, the mica becomes more abundant and more definite in direction, and at last the mass, when broken across the beds, assumes the appearance of Fig. 6 on the last page.† Now it will be noticed that, in the lines of that figure, no less than in Fig. 5, though more delicately, there is a subdued, but continual, expression of *undulation*. This character belongs, more or less, to nearly the whole mass of slaty crystalline rocks; it is one of exquisite beauty, and of the highest importance to their picturesque forms. It is also one of as great mysteriousness as beauty. For these two figures are selected from crystallines whose beds are remarkably straight; in the greater number the undulation becomes far more violent, and, in many, passes into absolute contortion. Fig. 7 is a piece of a slaty crystalline, rich in mica, from the Valley of St. Nicolas, below Zermatt. The rock from which it was broken was thrown into coils three or four feet across: the fragment, which is drawn of the real size, was at one of the

* See again Appendix 2. Slaty Cleavage.

† This is a piece of the gneiss of the Montanvert, near the Chalets of Blaitière dessous.

turns, and came away like a thick portion of a crumpled quire of paper from the other sheets.*

Fig. 7.

* "Some idea may be formed of the nature of these incurvations by supposing the gneiss beds to have been in a plastic state, either from the action of heat or of some other unknown cause, and, while in this state, to have been subjected to pressure at the two extremities, or in some other parts, according to the nature of the curvatures. But even this hypothesis (though the best that has been thought of) will scarcely enable us to explain all the contortions which not merely the beds of gneiss, but likewise of mica slate and clay slate, and even graywacke slate, exhibit. There is a bed of clay slate near the ferry to Kerrera,

§ 6. I might devote half a volume to a description of the fantastic and incomprehensible arrangement of these rocks and their veins; but all that is necessary for the general reader to know or remember, is this broad fact of the *undulation* of their whole substance. For there is something, it seems to me, inexpressibly marvellous in this phenomenon, largely looked at. It is to be remembered that these are the rocks which, on the average, will be oftenest observed, and with the greatest interest, by the human race. The central granites are too far removed, the lower rocks too common, to be carefully studied; these slaty crystallines form the noblest hills that are easily accessible, and seem to be thus calculated especially to attract observation, and reward it. Well, we begin to examine them; and first, we find a notable hardness in them, and a thorough boldness of general character, which make us regard them as very types of perfect rocks. They have nothing of the look of dried earth about them, nothing petty or limited in the display of their bulk. Where they are, they seem to form the world; no mere bank of a river here, or of a lane there, peeping out among the hedges or forests: but from the lowest valley to the highest clouds, all is theirs—one adamantine dominion and rigid authority of rock. We yield ourselves to the impression of their eternal, unconquera-

Typical character of Slaty Crystallines.

a few miles south of Oban, in Argyleshire. This bed has been partly wasted away by the sea, and its structure exposed to view. It contains a central cylindrical nucleus of unknown length (but certainly considerable), round which six beds of clay slate are wrapped, the one within the other, so as to form six concentric cylinders. Now, however plastic the clay slate may have been, there is no kind of pressure which will account for this structure; the central cylinder would have required to have been rolled six times in succession (allowing an interval for solidification between each) in the plastic clay slate."—*Outlines of Mineralogy, Geology, &c.*, by Thomas Thomson, M.D.

ble stubbornness of strength; their mass seems the least yielding, least to be softened, or in anywise dealt with by external force, of all earthly substance. And, behold, as we look farther into it, it is all touched and troubled, like waves by a summer breeze; rippled, far more delicately than seas or lakes are rippled; *they* only undulate along their surfaces—this rock trembles through its every fibre, like the chords of an Æolian harp—like the stillest air of spring with the echoes of a child's voice. Into the heart of all those great mountains, through every tossing of their boundless crests, and deep beneath all their unfathomable defiles, flows that strange quivering of their substance. Other and weaker things seem to express their subjection to an Infinite power only by momentary terrors: as the weeds bow down before the feverish wind, and the sound of the going in the tops of the taller trees passes on before the clouds, and the fitful opening of pale spaces on the dark water as if some invisible hand were casting dust abroad upon it, gives warning of the anger that is to come, we may well imagine that there is indeed a fear passing upon the grass, and leaves, and waters, at the presence of some great spirit commissioned to let the tempest loose; but the terror passes, and their sweet rest is perpetually restored to the pastures and the waves. Not so to the mountains. They, which at first seem strengthened beyond the dread of any violence or change, are yet also ordained to bear upon them the symbol of a perpetual Fear: the tremor which fades from the soft lake and gliding river is sealed, to all eternity, upon the rock; and while things that pass visibly from birth to death may sometimes forget their feebleness, the mountains are made to possess a perpetual memorial of their infancy,—that infancy which the prophet saw in his vision: "I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void, and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the moun-

tains, and lo, they *trembled;* and all the hills *moved lightly.*"

Serviceable characters of the Slaty Crystallines.

1. Fitness for building with.

§ 7. Thus far may we trace the apparent typical signification of the structure of those noble rocks. The material uses of this structure are not less important. These substances of the higher mountains, it is always to be remembered, were to be so hard as to enable them to be raised into, and remain in, the most magnificent forms; and this hardness renders it a matter of great difficulty for the peasant to break them into such masses as are required for his daily purposes. He is compelled in general to gather the fragments which are to form the walls of his house or his garden from the ruins into which the mountain suffers its ridges to be naturally broken; and if these pieces were absolutely irregular in shape, it would be a matter of much labor and skill to build securely with them. But the flattened arrangement of the layers of mica always causes the rock to break into flattish fragments, requiring hardly any pains in the placing them so as to lie securely in a wall, and furnishing light, broad, and unflawed pieces to serve for slates upon the roof; for fences, when set edgeways into the ground; or for pavements, when laid flat.

2. Stability in débris.

§ 8. Farther: whenever rocks break into utterly irregular fragments, the masses of débris which they form are not only excessively difficult to walk over, but the pieces touch each other in so few points, and suffer the water to run so easily and so far through their cavities, that it takes a long series of years to enable them either to settle themselves firmly, or receive the smallest covering of vegetation. Where the substance of the stone is soft, it may soon be worn down, so that the irregular form is of less consequence. But in the hard crystallines, unless they had a tendency

to break into flattish fragments, their ruin would remain for centuries in impassable desolation. The flat shape of the separate pieces prevents this; it permits—almost necessitates—their fitting into and over each other in a tolerably close mass, and thus they become comparatively easy to the foot, less permeable to water, and therefore retentive both of surface moisture and of the seeds of vegetation.

§ 9. There is another result of nearly equal importance as far as regards the habitableness of the hills. When stones are thrown together in rounded or massy blocks, like a heap of hazel nuts, small force will sometimes disturb their balance; and when once set in motion, a square-built and heavy fragment will thunder down even a slightly sloping declivity, with an impetus as unlikely to be arrested as fatal in its increase. But when stones lie flatly, as dead leaves lie, it is not easy to tilt any one of them upon its edge, so as to set it in motion; and when once moved, it will nearly always slide, not roll, and be stopped by the first obstacle it encounters, catching against it by the edge, or striking into the turf where first it falls, like a hatchet. Were it not for the merciful ordinance that the slaty crystallines should break into thin and flattish fragments, the frequent falls of stones from the hill sides would render many spots among the greater mountain chains utterly uninhabitable, which are now comparatively secure.

3. Security on declivities.

§ 10. Of the picturesque aspects which this mode of cleavage produces in the mountains, and in the stones of the foreground, we shall have to speak presently; with regard to the uses of the materials it is only necessary to note farther that these slaty rocks are of course, by their wilful way of breaking, rendered unfit for sculpture, and for nearly all purposes of art; the properties which ren-

4. Tendency to form the loveliest scenery.

der them convenient for the peasant in building his cottage, making them unavailable for the architecture of more elaborate edifices. One very great advantage is thus secured for the scenery they compose, namely, that it is rarely broken by quarries. A single quarry will often spoil a whole Alpine landscape; the effect of the lovely bay of the Lago Maggiore, for instance, in which lie the Borromean Islands, is, in great part, destroyed by the scar caused by a quarry of pink granite on its western shore; and the valley of Chamouni itself has lost some of its loveliest rock scenery in consequence of the unfortunate discovery that the bowlders which had fallen from its higher pinnacles, and were lying in massy heaps among its pines, were available for stone lintels and door-posts in the building of its new inns. But the slaty crystallines, though sometimes containing valuable mines, are hardly ever quarried for stone; and the scenes they compose retain, in general, little disturbed by man, their aspect of melancholy power, or simple and noble peace. The color of their own mass, when freshly broken, is nearly the same as that of the compact crystallines; but it is far more varied by veins and zones of included minerals, and contains usually more iron, which gives a rich brown or golden color to their exposed sides, so that the coloring of these rocks is the most glowing to be found in the mountain world. They form also soil for vegetation more quickly, and of a more fruitful kind than the granites, and appear, on the whole, intended to unite every character of grandeur and of beauty, and to constitute the loveliest as well as the noblest scenes which the earth ever unfolds to the eyes of men.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE MATERIALS OF MOUNTAINS:—THIRDLY, SLATY COHERENTS.

§ 1. It will be remembered that we resolved to give generally the term "coherent" to those rocks which appeared to be composed of one compact substance, not of several materials. But, as in all the arrangements of Nature we find that her several classes pass into each other by imperceptible gradations, and that there is no ruling of red lines between one and the other, we need not suppose that we shall find any plainly distinguishable limit between the crystalline and coherent rocks. Sometimes, indeed, a very distinctly marked crystalline will be joined by a coherent rock so sharply and neatly that it is possible to break off specimens, no larger than a walnut, containing portions of each; but far more frequently the transition from one to the other is effected gradually; or, if not, there exist, at any rate, in other places intervening, a series of rocks which possess an imperfectly crystalline character, passing down into that of simple coherence. This transition is usually effected through the different kinds of slate; the slaty crystallines becoming more and more fine in texture, until at last they appear composed of nothing but very fine mica or chlorite; and this mass of micaceous substance becomes more and more compact and silky in texture, losing its magnesia, and containing more of the earth which forms the substance of clay, until at

last it assumes the familiar appearance of roofing-slate, the noblest example of the coherent rocks. I call it the noblest, as being the nearest to the crystallines, and possessing much in common with them. Connected with this well-known substance are enormous masses of other rocks, more or less resembling it in character, of which the following are universal characteristics:

Characteristics of slaty coherents.

§ 2. First. They nearly always, as just said, contain more of the earth, which is the basis of clay, than the crystalline rocks; and they can be scratched or crushed with much greater facility. The point of a knife will trace a continuous powdery streak upon most of the coherent rocks; while it will be quite powerless against a large portion of the granular knots in the crystallines.

1. Softness of texture.

Besides this actual softness of substance, the slaty coherents are capable of very fine division into flakes, not irregularly and contortedly, like the crystallines, but straightly, so as to leave a silky lustre on the sides of the fragments, as in roofing-slate; and separating with great ease, yielding to a slight pressure against the edge. Consequently, although the slaty coherents are capable of forming large and bold mountains, they are liable to all kinds of destruction and decay in a far greater degree than the crystallines; giving way in large masses under frost, and crumbling into heaps of flaky rubbish, which in its turn dissolves or is ground down into impalpable dust or mud, and carried to great distances by the mountain streams. These characters render the slaty coherents peculiarly adapted for the support of vegetation; and as, though apparently homogeneous, they usually contain as many chemical elements as the crystallines, they constitute (as far as regards the immediate nourishment of soils) the most important part of mountain ranges.

2. Lamination of structure.

§ 3. I have already often had occasion to allude to the apparent connection of brilliancy of color with vigor of life, or purity of substance. This is pre-eminently the case in the mineral kingdom. The perfection with which the particles of any substance unite in crystallization corresponds, in that kingdom, to the vital power in organic nature; and it is a universal law, that according to the purity of any substance, and according to the energy of its crystallization, is its beauty or brightness. Pure earths are without exception white when in powder; and the same earths which are the constitutents of clay and sand, form, when crystallized, the emerald, ruby, sapphire, amethyst, and opal. Darkness and dulness of color are the universal signs of dissolution, or disorderly mingling of elements.*

3. Darkness and blueness in color.

§ 4. Accordingly, these slaty coherents, being usually composed of many elements imperfectly united, are also for the most part gray, black, or dull purple; those which are purest and hardest verging most upon purple, and some of them in certain lights displaying, on their smooth sides, very beautiful zones and changeful spaces of gray, russet, and obscure blue. But even this beauty is strictly connected with their preservation of such firmness of form as properly belongs to them; it is seen chiefly on their even and silky surfaces; less, in comparison, upon their broken edges, and is lost altogether when they are reduced to powder. They then form a dull, gray dust, or, with moisture, a black slime, of great value as a vegetative earth, but of intense ugliness when it occurs in extended spaces in mountain scenery. And thus the slaty coherents are often employed to form those landscapes of which the purpose appears to be to impress us with a sense of horror and pain, as a foil to neighbor-

* Compare the close of § 11, Chap. III. Vol. III., and, here, Chap. III. § 23.

ing scenes of extreme beauty. There are many spots among the inferior ridges of the Alps, such as the Col de Ferret, the Col d'Anterne, and the associated ranges of the Buet, which, though commanding prospects of great nobleness, are themselves very nearly types of all that is most painful to the human mind. Vast wastes of mountain ground, covered here and there with dull gray grass, or moss, but breaking continually into black banks of shattered slate, all glistening and sodden with slow tricklings of clogged, incapable streams; the snow water oozing through them in a cold sweat, and spreading itself in creeping stains among their dust; ever and anon a shaking here and there, and a handful or two of their particles or flakes trembling down, one sees not why, into more total dissolution, leaving a few jagged teeth, like the edges of knives eaten away by vinegar, projecting through the half-dislodged mass from the inner rock, keen enough to cut the hand or foot that rests on them, yet crumbling as they wound, and soon sinking again into the smooth, slippery, glutinous heap, looking like a beach of black scales of dead fish, cast ashore from a poisonous sea, and sloping away into foul ravines, branched down immeasurable slopes of barrenness, where the winds howl and wander continually, and the snow lies in wasted and sorrowful fields, covered with sooty dust, that collects in streaks and stains at the bottom of all its thawing ripples. I know no other scenes so appalling as these in storm, or so woful in sunshine.

§ 5. Where, however, these same rocks exist in more favorable positions, that is to say, in gentler banks and at lower elevations, they form a ground for the most luxuriant vegetation; and the valleys of Savoy owe to them some of their loveliest solitudes, — exquisitely rich pastures, interspersed with arable and orchard land, and shaded by groves of walnut and cherry. Scenes of this kind, and of

4. Great power of supporting vegetation.

that just described, so singularly opposed, and apparently brought together as foils to each other, are, however, peculiar to certain beds of the slaty coherents, which are both vast in elevation and easy of destruction. In Wales and Scotland, the same groups of rocks possess far greater hardness, while they attain less elevation; and the result is a totally different aspect of scenery. The severity of the climate, and the comparative durableness of the rock, forbid the rich vegetation; but the exposed summits, though barren, are not subject to laws of destruction so rapid and fearful as in Switzerland; and the natural color of the rock is oftener developed in the purples and grays which, mingled with the heather, form the principal elements of the deep and beautiful distant blue of the British hills. Their gentler mountain streams also permit the beds of rock to remain in firm, though fantastic, forms along their banks, and the gradual action of the cascades and eddies upon the slaty cleavage produces many pieces of foreground scenery to which higher hills can present no parallel. Of these peculiar conditions we shall have to speak at length in another place.

§ 6. As far as regards ministry to the purposes of man, the slaty coherents are of somewhat more value than the slaty crystallines. Most of them can be used in the same way for rough buildings, while they furnish finer plates or sheets for roofing. It would be difficult, perhaps, to estimate the exact importance of their educational influence in the form of drawing-slate. For sculpture they are, of course, altogether unfit, but I believe certain finer conditions of them are employed for a dark ground in Florentine mosaic.

5. Adaptation to architecture and the fine arts.

§ 7. It remains only to be noticed, that the direction of the lamination (or separation into small folia) is, in these rocks, not always, nor even often indicative of the true direction of their larger beds. It is not, however,

necessary for the reader to enter into questions of such complicated nature as those which belong to the study of slaty cleavage; and only a few points, which I could not pass over, are noted in the Appendix; but it is necessary to observe here, that all rocks, however constituted, or however disposed, have certain ways of breaking in one direction rather than another, and separating themselves into blocks by means of smooth cracks or fissures, technically called joints, which often influence their forms more than either the position of their beds, or their slaty lamination; and always are conspicuous in their weathered masses. Of these, however, as it would be wearisome to enter into more detail at present, I rather choose to speak incidentally, as we meet with examples of their results in the scenery we have to study more particularly.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE MATERIALS OF MOUNTAINS:—FOURTHLY, COMPACT COHERENTS.

§ 1. This group of rocks, the last we have to examine, is, as far as respects geographical extent and usefulness to the human race, more important than any of the preceding ones. It forms the greater part of all low hills and uplands throughout the world, and supplies the most valuable materials for building and sculpture, being distinguished from the group of the slaty coherents by its incapability of being separated into thin sheets. All the rocks belonging to the group break irregularly, like loaf-sugar or dried clay. Some of them are composed of hardened calcareous matter, and are known as limestone; others are merely hardened sand, and are called freestone or sandstone; and others, appearing to consist of dry mud or clay, are of less general importance, and receive different names in different localities.

§ 2. Among these rocks, the foremost position is, of course, occupied by the great group of the marbles, of which the substance appears to have been prepared expressly in order to afford to human art a perfect means of carrying out its purposes. They are of exactly the necessary hardness,—neither so soft as to be incapable of maintaining themselves in delicate forms, nor so hard as always to require a blow to give effect to the sculptor's touch; the mere pressure of his chisel produces a

certain effect upon them. The color of the white varieties is of exquisite delicacy, owing to the partial translucency of the pure rock; and it has always appeared to me a most wonderful ordinance,—one of the most *marked* pieces of purpose in the creation,—that all the variegated kinds should be comparatively opaque, so as to set off the color on the surface, while the white, which if it had been opaque would have looked somewhat coarse (as, for instance, common chalk does), is rendered just translucent enough to give an impression of extreme purity, but not so translucent as to interfere in the least with the distinctness of any forms into which it is wrought. The colors of variegated marbles are also for the most part very beautiful, especially those composed of purple, amber, and green, with white; and there seems to be something notably attractive to the human mind in the vague and veined labyrinths of their arrangements. They are farther marked as the prepared material for human work by the dependence of their beauty on smoothness of surface; for their veins are usually seen but dimly in the native rock; and the colors they assume under the action of weather are inferior to those of the crystallines: it is not until wrought and polished by man that they show their character. Finally, they do not decompose. The exterior surface is sometimes destroyed by a sort of mechanical disruption of its outer flakes, but rarely to the extent in which such action takes place in other rocks; and the most delicate sculptures, if executed in good marble, will remain for ages undeteriorated.

§ 3. Quarries of marble are, however, rare, and we owe the greatest part of the good architecture of this world to the more ordinary limestones and sandstones, easily obtainable in blocks of considerable size, and capable of being broken, sawn, or sculptured with ease; the color, generally gray, or warm red (the yellow and

white varieties becoming gray with age), being exactly that which will distinguish buildings by an agreeable contrast from the vegetation by which they may be surrounded.

To these inferior conditions of the compact coherence we owe also the greater part of the *pretty* scenery of the inhabited globe. The sweet winding valleys, with peeping cliffs on either side; the light, irregular wanderings of broken streamlets; the knolls and slopes covered with rounded woods; the narrow ravines, carpeted with greensward, and haunted by traditions of fairy or gnome; the jutting crags, crowned by the castle or watch-tower; the white sea-cliff and sheep-fed down; the long succession of coteau, sunburnt, and bristling with vines,—all these owe whatever they have of simple beauty to the peculiar nature of the group of rocks of which we are speaking; a group which, though occasionally found in mountain masses of magnificent form and size, is on the whole characterized by a comparative smallness of scale, and a tendency to display itself less in true mountains than in elevated downs or plains, through which winding valleys, more or less deep, are cut by the action of the streams.

§ 4. It has been said that this group of rocks is distinguished by its incapability of being separated into sheets. This is only true of it in small portions, for it is usually deposited in beds or layers of irregular thickness, which are easily separable from each other; and when, as not infrequently happens, some of these beds are only half an inch or a quarter of an inch thick, the rock appears to break into flat plates like a slaty coherent. But this appearance is deceptive. However thin the bed may be, it will be found that it is in its own substance compact, and not separable into two other beds; but the true slaty coherents possess a delicate slatiness of structure, carried into their most minute

portions, so that however thin a piece of them may be, it is usually possible, if we have instruments fine enough, to separate it into two still thinner flakes. As, however, the slaty and compact crystallines, so also the slaty and compact coherents pass into each other by subtle gradations, and present many intermediate conditions, very obscure and indefinable.

§ 5. I said just now that the colors of the compact coherents were usually such as would pleasantly distinguish buildings from vegetation. They are so; but considered as abstract hues, are yet far less agreeable than those of the nobler and older rocks. And it is to be noticed, that as these inferior rocks are the materials with which we usually build, they form the ground of the idea suggested to most men's minds by the word "stone," and therefore the general term "stone-color" is used in common parlance as expressive of the hue to which the compact coherents for the most part approximate. By stone-color I suppose we all understand a sort of tawny gray, with too much yellow in it to be called cold, and too little to be called warm. And it is quite true that over enormous districts of Europe, composed of what are technically known as "Jura" and "mountain" limestones, and various pale sandstones, such is generally the color of any freshly broken rock which peeps out along the sides of their gentler hills. It becomes a little grayer as it is colored by time, but never reaches anything like the noble hues of the gneiss and slate; the very lichens which grow upon it are poorer and paler; and although the deep wood mosses will sometimes bury it altogether in golden cushions, the minor mosses, whose office is to decorate and checker the rocks without concealing them, are always more meagrely set on these limestones than on the crystallines.

§ 6. I never have had time to examine and throw into

classes the varieties of the mosses which grow on the two kinds of rock, nor have I been able to ascertain whether there are really numerous differences between the species, or whether they only grow more luxuriantly on the crystallines than on the coherents. But this is certain, that on the broken rocks of the foreground in the crystalline groups the mosses seem to set themselves consentfully and deliberately to the task of producing the most exquisite harmonies of color in their power. They will not conceal the form of the rock, but will gather over it in little brown bosses, like small cushions of velvet made of mixed threads of dark ruby silk and gold, rounded over more subdued films of white and gray, with lightly crisped and curled edges like hoar frost on fallen leaves, and minute clusters of upright orange stalks with pointed caps, and fibres of deep green, and gold, and faint purple passing into black, all woven together, and following with unimaginable fineness of gentle growth the undulation of the stone they cherish, until it is charged with color so that it can receive no more; and instead of looking rugged, or cold, or stern, or anything that a rock is held to be at heart, it seems to be clothed with a soft, dark leopard skin, embroidered with arabesque of purple and silver. But in the lower ranges this is not so. The mosses grow in more independent spots, not in such a clinging and tender way over the whole surface; the lichens are far poorer and fewer; and the color of the stone itself is seen more frequently; altered, if at all, only into a little chiller gray than when it is freshly broken. So that a limestone landscape is apt to be dull, and cold in general tone, with some aspect even of barrenness. The sandstones are much richer in vegetation: there are, perhaps, no scenes in our own island more interesting than the wooded dingles which traverse them, the red rocks growing out on either side, and shelving down

into the pools of their deep brown rivers, as at Jedburgh and Langholme; the steep oak copses climbing the banks, the paler plumes of birch shaking themselves free into the light of the sky above, and the few arches of the monastery where the fields in the glen are greenest, or the stones of the border tower where its cliffs are steepest, rendering both field and cliff a thousandfold more dear to the heart and sight. But deprived of associations, and compared in their mere natural beauty with the ravines of the central ranges, there can be no question but that even the loveliest passages of such scenery are imperfect and poor in foreground color. And at first there would seem to be an unfairness in this, unlike the usual system of compensation which so often manifests itself throughout nature. The higher mountains have their scenes of power and vastness, their blue precipices and cloud-like snows: why should they also have the best and fairest colors given to their foreground rocks, and overburden the human mind with wonder; while the less majestic scenery, tempting us to the observance of details for which amidst the higher mountains we had no admiration left, is yet, in the beauty of those very details, as inferior as it is in the scale of magnitude?

§ 7. I believe the answer must be, simply, that it is not good for man to live among what is most beautiful; —that he is a creature incapable of satisfaction by anything upon earth; and that to allow him habitually to possess, in any kind whatsoever, the utmost that earth can give, is the surest way to cast him into lassitude or discontent.

If the most exquisite orchestral music could be continued without a pause for a series of years, and children were brought up and educated in the room in which it was perpetually resounding, I believe their enjoyment of music, or understanding of it, would be very small

And an accurately parallel effect seems to be produced upon the powers of contemplation, by the redundant and ceaseless loveliness of the high mountain districts. The faculties are paralyzed by the abundance, and cease, as we before noticed of the imagination, to be capable of excitement, except by other subjects of interest than those which present themselves to the eye. So that it is, in reality, better for mankind that the forms of their common landscape should offer no violent stimulus to the emotions,—that the gentle upland, browned by the bending furrows of the plough, and the fresh sweep of the chalk down, and the narrow winding of the copse-clad dingle, should be more frequent scenes of human life than the Arcadias of cloud-capped mountain or luxuriant vale; and that, while humbler (though always infinite) sources of interest are given to each of us around the homes to which we are restrained for the greater part of our lives, these mightier and stranger glories should become the objects of adventure,—at once the cynosures of the fancies of childhood, and themes of the happy memory, and the winter's tale of age.

§ 8. Nor is it always that the inferiority is felt. For, so natural is it to the human heart to fix itself in hope rather than in present possession, and so subtle is the charm which the imagination casts over what is distant or denied, that there is often a more touching power in the scenes which contain far-away promise of something greater than themselves, than in those which exhaust the treasures and powers of Nature in an unconquerable and excellent glory, leaving nothing more to be by the fancy pictured, or pursued.

I do not know that there is a district in the world more calculated to illustrate this power of the expectant imagination, than that which surrounds the city of Fribourg in Switzerland, extending from it towards Berne. It is of gray sandstone, considerably elevated, but pre-

senting no object of striking interest to the passing traveller; so that, as it is generally seen in the course of a hasty journey from the Bernese Alps to those of Savoy, it is rarely regarded with any other sensation than that of weariness, all the more painful because accompanied with reaction from the high excitement caused by the splendor of the Bernese Oberland. The traveller, footsore, feverish, and satiated with glacier and precipice, lies back in the corner of the diligence, perceiving little more than that the road is winding and hilly, and the country through which it passes cultivated and tame. Let him, however, only do this tame country the justice of staying in it a few days, until his mind has recovered its tone, and take one or two long walks through its fields, and he will have other thoughts of it. It is, as I said, an undulating district of gray sandstone, never attaining any considerable height, but having enough of the mountain spirit to throw itself into continual succession of bold slope and dale; elevated, also, just far enough above the sea to render the pine a frequent forest tree along its irregular ridges. Through this elevated tract the river cuts its way in a ravine some five or six hundred feet in depth, which winds for leagues between the gentle hills, unthought of, until its edge is approached; and then suddenly, through the boughs of the firs, the eye perceives, beneath, the green and gliding stream, and the broad walls of sandstone cliff that form its banks; hollowed out where the river leans against them, at its turns, into perilous overhanging, and, on the other shore, at the same spots, leaving little breadths of meadow between them and the water, half-overgrown with thicket, deserted in their sweetness, inaccessible from above, and rarely visited by any curious wanderers along the hardly traceable footpath which struggles for existence beneath the rocks. And there the river ripples, and eddies, and murmurs in an utter soli-

tude. It is passing through the midst of a thickly peopled country; but never was a stream so lonely. The feeblest and most far-away torrent among the high hills has its companions: the goats browse beside it; and the traveller drinks from it, and passes over it with his staff; and the peasant traces a new channel for it down to his mill-wheel. But this stream has no companions: it flows on in an infinite seclusion, not secret nor threatening, but a quietness of sweet daylight and open air,—a broad space of tender and deep desolateness, drooped into repose out of the midst of human labor and life; the waves plashing lowly, with none to hear them; and the wild birds building in the boughs, with none to fray them away; and the soft, fragrant herbs rising, and breathing, and fading, with no hand to gather them;—and yet all bright and bare to the clouds above, and to the fresh fall of the passing sunshine and pure rain.

§ 9. But above the brows of those scarped cliffs, all is in an instant changed. A few steps only beyond the firs that stretch their branches, angular, and wild, and white, like forks of lightning, into the air of the ravine, and we are in an arable country of the most perfect richness; the swathes of its corn glowing and burning from field to field; its pretty hamlets all vivid with fruitful orchards and flowery gardens, and goodly with steep-roofed storehouse and barn; its well-kept, hard, park-like roads rising and falling from hillside to hillside, or disappearing among brown banks of moss, and thickets of the wild raspberry and rose; or gleaming through lines of tall trees, half glade, half avenue, where the gate opens, or the gateless path turns trustedly aside, unhindered, into the garden of some statelier house, surrounded in rural pride with its golden hives, and carved granaries, and irregular domain of latticed and espaliered cottages, gladdening to look upon in their delicate homeliness—delicate, yet, in some sort, rude; not like our English

homes—trim, laborious, formal, irreproachable in comfort; but with a peculiar carelessness and largeness in all their detail, harmonizing with the outlawed loveliness of their country. For there is an untamed strength even in all that soft and habitable land. It is, indeed, gilded with corn and fragrant with deep grass, but it is not subdued to the plough or to the scythe. It gives at its own free will,—it seems to have nothing wrested from it nor conquered in it. It is not redeemed from desertness, but unrestrained in fruitfulness,—a generous land, bright with capricious plenty, and laughing from vale to vale in fitful fulness, kind and wild; nor this without some sterner element mingled in the heart of it. For along all its ridges stand the dark masses of innumerable pines, taking no part in its gladness, asserting themselves forever as fixed shadows, not to be pierced or banished, even in the intensest sunlight; fallen flakes and fragments of the night, stayed in their solemn squares in the midst of all the rosy bendings of the orchard boughs, and yellow effulgence of the harvest, and tracing themselves in black network and motionless fringes against the blanched blue of the horizon in its saintly clearness. And yet they do not sadden the landscape, but seem to have been set there chiefly to show how bright everything else is round them; and all the clouds look of purer silver, and all the air seems filled with a whiter and more living sunshine, where they are pierced by the sable points of the pines; and all the pastures look of more glowing green, where they run up between the purple trunks; and the sweet field footpaths skirt the edges of the forest for the sake of its shade, sloping up and down about the slippery roots, and losing themselves every now and then hopelessly among the violets, and ground ivy, and brown sheddings of the fibrous leaves; and, at last, plunging into some open aisle where the light through the distant stems shows that there is a

chance of coming out again on the other side; and coming out, indeed, in a little while, from the scented darkness, into the dazzling air and marvellous landscape, and stretches still farther and farther in new wilfulness of grove and garden, until, at last, the craggy mountains of the Simmenthal rise out of it, sharp into the rolling of the southern clouds.

§ 10. I believe, for general development of human intelligence and sensibility, country of this kind is about the most perfect that exists. A richer landscape, as that of Italy, enervates, or causes wantonness; a poorer contracts the conceptions, and hardens the temperament of both mind and body; and one more curiously or prominently beautiful deadens the sense of beauty. Even what is here of attractiveness,—far exceeding, as it does, that of most of the thickly peopled districts of the temperate zone,—seems to act harmfully on the poetical character of the Swiss; but take its inhabitants all in all, as with deep love and stern penetration they are painted in the works of their principal writer, Gotthelf, and I believe we shall not easily find a peasantry which would completely sustain comparison with them.

§ 11. But be this as it may, it is certain that the compact coherent rocks are appointed to form the greatest part of the earth's surface, and by their utility, and easily changed and governed qualities, to tempt man to dwell among them; being, however, in countries not definitely mountainous, usually covered to a certain depth by those beds of loose gravel and sand to which we agreed to give the name of diluvium. There is nothing which will require to be noted respecting these last, except the forms into which they are brought by the action of water; and the account of these belongs properly to the branch of inquiry which follows next in the order we proposed to ourselves, namely, that touching the sculpture of mountains, to which it will be best to

devote some separate chapters; this only being noted in conclusion respecting the various rocks whose nature we have been describing, that out of the entire series of them we may obtain almost every color pleasant to human sight, not the less so for being generally a little softened or saddened. Thus we have beautiful subdued reds, reaching tones of deep purple, in the porphyries, and of pale rose color, in the granites; every kind of silvery and leaden gray, passing into purple, in the slates; deep green, and every hue of greenish gray, in the volcanic rocks and serpentines; rich orange, and golden brown, in the gneiss; black, in the lias limestones; and all these, together with pure white, in the marbles. One color only we hardly ever get in an exposed rock—that dull *brown* which we noticed above, in speaking of color generally, as the most repulsive of all hues; every approximation to it is softened by nature, when exposed to the atmosphere, into a purple gray. All this can hardly be otherwise interpreted, than as prepared for the delight and recreation of man; and I trust that the time may soon come when these beneficent and beautiful gifts of color may be rightly felt and wisely employed, and when the variegated fronts of our houses may render the term "stone-color" as little definite in the mind of the architect as that of "flower-color" would be to the horticulturist.

CHAPTER XII.

ON THE SCULPTURE OF MOUNTAINS:—FIRST, THE LATERAL RANGES.

§ 1. Close beside the path by which travellers ascend the Montanvert from the valley of Chamouni, on the right hand, where it first begins to rise among the pines, there descends a small stream from the foot of the granite peak known to the guides as the Aiguille Charmoz. It is concealed from the traveller by a thicket of alder, and its murmur is hardly heard, for it is one of the weakest streams of the valley. But it is a constant stream; fed by a permanent though small glacier, and continuing to flow even to the close of the summer, when more copious torrents, depending only on the melting of the lower snows, have left their beds "stony channels in the sun."

I suppose that my readers must be generally aware that glaciers are masses of ice in slow motion, at the rate of from ten to twenty inches a day, and that the stones which are caught between them and the rocks over which they pass, or which are embedded in the ice and dragged along by it over those rocks, are of course subjected to a crushing and grinding power altogether unparalleled by any other force in constant action. The dust to which these stones are reduced by the friction is carried down by the streams which flow from the melting glacier, so that the water which in the morning may be pure, owing what little strength it has chiefly to the rock springs, is in the afternoon not only increased in volume, but

whitened with the dissolved dust of granite, in proportion to the heat of the preceding hours of the day, and to the power and size of the glacier which feeds it.

§ 2. The long drought which took place in the autumn of the year 1854, sealing every source of waters except these perpetual ones, left the torrent of which I am speaking, and such others, in a state peculiarly favorable to observance of their *least* action on the mountains from which they descend. They were entirely limited to their own ice fountains, and the quantity of powdered rock which they brought down was, of course, at its minimum, being nearly unmingled with any earth derived from the dissolution of softer soil, or vegetable mould, by rains.

At three in the afternoon, on a warm day in September, when the torrent had reached its average maximum strength for the day, I filled an ordinary Bordeaux wine-flask with the water where it was least turbid. From this quart of water I obtained twenty-four grains of sand and sediment, more or less fine. I cannot estimate the quantity of water in the stream; but the runlet of it at which I filled the flask was giving about two hundred bottles a minute, or rather more, carrying down therefore about three-quarters of a pound of powdered granite every minute. This would be forty-five pounds an hour; but allowing for the inferior power of the stream in the cooler periods of the day, and taking into consideration, on the other side, its increased power in rain, we may, I think, estimate its average hour's work at twenty-eight or thirty pounds, or a hundred weight every four hours. By this insignificant runlet, therefore, some four inches wide and four inches deep, rather more than two tons of the substance of the Mont Blanc are displaced, and carried down a certain distance every week; and as it is only for three or four months that the flow of the stream is checked by frost, we may cer-

tainly allow eighty tons for the mass which it annually moves.

§ 3. It is not worth while to enter into any calculation of the relation borne by this runlet to the great torrents which descend from the chain of Mont Blanc into the valley of Chamouni. To call it the thousandth part of the glacier waters, would give a ludicrous under-estimate of their total power; but even so calling it, we should find for result that eighty thousand tons of mountain must be yearly transformed into drifted sand, and carried down a certain distance.* How much greater than this is the actual quantity so transformed I cannot tell; but take this quantity as certain, and consider that this represents merely the results of the labor of the constant summer streams, utterly irrespective of all sudden falls of stones and of masses of mountain (a single thunderbolt will sometimes leave a scar on the flank of a soft rock, looking like a trench for a railroad); and we shall then begin to apprehend something of the operation of the great laws of change, which are the conditions of all material existence, however apparently enduring. The hills, which, as compared with living beings, seem "everlasting," are, in truth, as perishing as they: its veins of flowing fountain weary the mountain heart, as the crimson pulse does ours; the natural force of the iron crag is abated in its appointed time, like the strength of the sinews in a human old age; and it is but the lapse of the longer years of decay which, in the sight of its Creator, distinguishes the mountain range from the moth and the worm.

§ 4. And hence two questions arise of the deepest interest. From what first created forms were the moun-

* How far, is another question. The sand which the stream brings from the bottom of one eddy in its course, it throws down in the next; all that is *proved* by the above trial is, that so many tons of material are annually carried down by it a certain number of feet.

tains brought into their present condition? into what forms will they change in the course of ages? Was the world anciently in a more or less perfect state than it is now? was it less or more fitted for the habitation of the human race? and are the changes which it is now undergoing favorable to that race or not? The present conformation of the earth appears dictated, as has been shown in the preceding chapters, by supreme wisdom and kindness. And yet its former state must have been different from what it is now; as its present one from that which it must assume hereafter. Is this, therefore, the earth's prime into which we are born; or is it, with all its beauty, only the wreck of Paradise?

I cannot entangle the reader in the intricacy of the inquiries necessary for anything like a satisfactory solution of these questions. But, were he to engage in such inquiries, their result would be his strong conviction of the earth's having been brought from a state in which it was utterly uninhabitable into one fitted for man;—of its having been, when first inhabitable, more beautiful than it is now; and of its gradually tending to still greater inferiority of aspect, and unfitness for abode.

It has, indeed, been the endeavor of some geologists to prove that destruction and renovation are continually proceeding simultaneously in mountains as well as in organic creatures; that while existing eminences are being slowly lowered, others, in order to supply their place, are being slowly elevated; and that what is lost in beauty or healthiness in one spot is gained in another. But I cannot assent to such a conclusion. Evidence altogether incontrovertible points to a state of the earth in which it could be tenanted only by lower animals, fitted for the circumstances under which they lived by peculiar organizations. From this state it is admitted gradually to have been brought into that in which we now see it; and the circumstances of the ex-

isting dispensation, whatever may be the date of its endurance, seem to me to point not less clearly to an end than to an origin; to a creation, when "the earth was without form and void," and to a close, when it must either be renovated or destroyed.

§ 5. In one sense, and in one only, the idea of a continuous order of things is admissible, in so far as the phenomena which introduced, and those which are to terminate, the existing dispensation, may have been, and may in future be, nothing more than a gigantic development of agencies which are in continual operation around us. The experience we possess of volcanic agency is not yet large enough to enable us to set limits to its force; and as we see the rarity of subterraneous action generally proportioned to its violence, there may be appointed, in the natural order of things, convulsions to take place after certain epochs, on a scale which the human race has not yet lived long enough to witness. The soft silver cloud which writhes innocently on the crest of Vesuvius, rests there without intermission; but the fury which lays cities in sepulchres of lava bursts forth only after intervals of centuries; and the still fiercer indignation of the greater volcanoes, which make half the globe vibrate with earthquake, and shrivels up whole kingdoms with flame, is recorded only in dim distances of history: so that it is not irrational to admit that there may yet be powers dormant, not destroyed, beneath the apparently calm surface of the earth, whose date of rest is the endurance of the human race, and whose date of action must be that of its doom. But whether such colossal agencies are indeed in the existing order of things or not, still the effective truth, for us, is one and the same. The earth, as a tormented and trembling ball, may have rolled in space for myriads of ages before humanity was formed from its dust; and as a devastated ruin it may continue to roll, when all that dust shall

again have been mingled with ashes that never were warmed by life, or polluted by sin. But for us the intelligible and substantial fact is that the earth has been brought, by forces we know not of, into a form fitted for our habitation: on that form a gradual, but destructive, change is continually taking place, and the course of that change points clearly to a period when it will no more be fitted for the dwelling-place of men.

§ 6. It is, therefore, not so much what these forms of the earth actually are, as what they are continually becoming, that we have to observe; nor is it possible thus to observe them without an instinctive reference to the first state out of which they have been brought. The existing torrent has dug its bed a thousand feet deep. But in what form was the mountain originally raised which gave that torrent its track and power? The existing precipice is wrought into towers and bastions by the perpetual fall of its fragments. In what form did it stand before a single fragment fell?

Yet to such questions, continually suggesting themselves, it is never possible to give a complete answer. For a certain distance, the past work of existing forces can be traced; but there gradually the mist gathers, and the footsteps of more gigantic agencies are traceable in the darkness; and still, as we endeavor to penetrate farther and farther into departed time, the thunder of the Almighty power sounds louder and louder; and the clouds gather broader and more fearfully, until at last the Sinai of the world is seen altogether upon a smoke, and the fence of its foot is reached, which none can break through.

§ 7. If, therefore, we venture to advance towards the spot where the cloud first comes down, it is rather with the purpose of fully pointing out that there *is* a cloud, than of entering into it. It is well to have been fully convinced of the existence of the mystery, in an age far too apt to suppose that everything which is visible is ex-

plicable, and everything that is present, eternal. But besides ascertaining the existence of this mystery, we shall perhaps be able to form some new conjectures respecting the facts of mountain aspects in the past ages. Not respecting the processes or powers to which the hills owe their origin, but respecting the aspect they first assumed.

§ 8. For it is evident that, through all their ruin, some traces must still exist of the original contours. The directions in which the mass gives way must have been dictated by the disposition of its ancient sides; and the currents of the streams that wear its flanks must still, in great part, follow the course of the primal valleys. So that, in the actual form of any mountain peak, there must usually be traceable the shadow or skeleton of its former self; like the obscure indications of the first frame of a war-worn tower, preserved, in some places, under the heap of its ruins, in others to be restored in imagination from the thin remnants of its tottering shell; while here and there, in some sheltered spot, a few unfallen stones retain their Gothic sculpture, and a few touches of the chisel, or stains of color, inform us of the whole mind and perfect skill of the old designer. With this great difference, nevertheless, that in the human architecture the builder did not calculate upon ruin, nor appoint the course of independent desolation; but that in the hand of the great Architect of the mountains, time and decay are as much the instruments of His purpose as the forces by which He first led forth the troops of hills in leaping flocks:—the lightning and the torrent and the wasting and weariness of innumerable ages, all bear their part in the working out of one consistent plan; and the Builder of the temple for ever stands beside His work, appointing the stone that is to fall, and the pillar that is to be abased, and guiding all the seeming wildness of chance and change, into ordained splendors and foreseen harmonies.

§ 9. Mountain masses, then, considered with respect to their first raising and first sculpture, may be conveniently divided into two great groups; namely, those made up of beds or layers, commonly called stratified; and those made of more or less united substance, called unstratified. The former are nearly always composed of coherent rocks, the latter of crystallines; and the former almost always occupy the outside, the latter the centre of mountain chains. It signifies, therefore, very little whether we distinguish the groups by calling one stratified and the other unstratified, or one "coherent" and the other "crystalline," or one "lateral" and the other "central." But as this last distinction in position seems to have more influence on their forms than either of the others, it is, perhaps, best, when we are examining them in connection with art, that this should be thoroughly kept in mind; and therefore we will consider the first group under the title of "lateral ranges," and the second under that of "central peaks."

§ 10. The LATERAL RANGES, which we are first to examine, are, for the most part, broad tabular masses of sandstone, limestone, or whatever their material may be,—tilted slightly up over large spaces (several or many miles square), and forming precipices with their exposed edges, as a book resting obliquely on another book forms miniature precipices with its back and sides. The book is a tolerably accurate representation of the mountain range in substance, as well as in external aspect; nearly all these tabular masses of rock being composed of a multitude of thinner beds or layers, as the thickness of

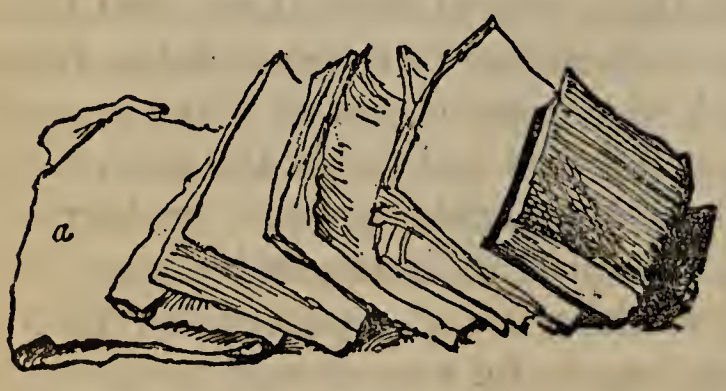


FIG. 8.

the book is made up of its leaves; while every one of the mountain leaves is usually written over, though in dim characters, like those of a faded manuscript, with history of departed ages.

"How were these mountain volumes raised, and how are they supported?" are the natural questions following such a statement.

And the only answer is: "Behold the cloud."

No eye has ever seen one of these raised on a large scale; no investigation has brought completely to light the conditions under which the materials which support them were prepared. This only is the simple fact, that they *are* raised into such sloping positions; generally several resting one upon another, like a row of books fallen down (Fig. 8); the last book being usually propped by a piece of formless compact crystalline rock, represented by the piece of crumpled paper at *a*.

§ 11. It is another simple fact that this arrangement is not effected in an orderly and serene manner; but that the books, if they were ever neatly bound, have been fearfully torn to pieces and dog's-eared in the course of their elevation; sometimes torn leaf from leaf, but more commonly rent across, as if the paper had been wet and soft: or, to leave the book similitude, which is becoming inconvenient, the beds seem to have been in the consistence of a paste, more or less dry; in some places brittle, and breaking, like a cake, fairly across; in others moist and tough, and tearing like dough, or bending like hot iron; and, in others, crushed and shivering into dust, like unannealed glass. And in these various states they are either bent or broken, or shivered, as the case may be, into fragments of various shapes, which are usually tossed one on

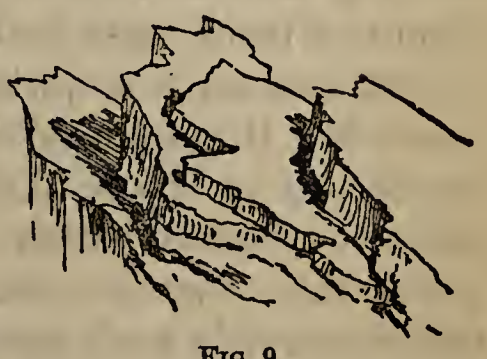


FIG. 9.

top of another, as above described; but, of course, under such circumstances, presenting, not the uniform edges of the books, but jagged edges, as in Fig. 9.

§ 12. Do not let it be said that I am passing my prescribed limits, and that I have tried to enter the clouds, and am describing operations which have never been witnessed. I describe facts or semblances, not operations. I say "*seem* to have been," not "have been." I say "*are* bent;" I do not say "*have been* bent." Most travellers must remember the entrance to the valley of Cluse, from the plain of Bonneville, on the road from Geneva to Chamouni. They remember that immediately after entering it they find a great precipice on their left, not less than two thousand feet in perpendicular height. That precipice is formed by beds of limestone bent like a rainbow, as in Fig. 10. Their edges constitute the cliff; the flat arch which they form with their backs is covered with pine forests and meadows, extending for three or four leagues in the direction of Sixt. Whether the whole mountain was called out of nothing into the form it possesses, or created first in the form of a level mass, and then actually bent and broken by external force is quite irrelevant to our present purpose; but it is impossible to describe its form without appearing to imply the latter alternative; and all the distinct evidence which can be obtained upon the subject points to such a conclusion, although there are certain features in such mountains which, up to the present time, have rendered all positive conclusion impossible, not because they contradict the theories in question, but because they are utterly inexplicable on any theory whatever.

FIG. 10.

§ 13. We return then to our Fig. 9, representing beds which *appear* to have been broken short off at the edges. "If they ever were actually broken," the reader asks, "what could have become of the bits?" Sometimes they seem to have been lost, carried away no one knows where. Sometimes they are really found in scattered fragments or dust in the neighborhood. Sometimes the mountain is simply broken in two, and the pieces correspond to each other, only leaving a valley between; but more frequently one-half slips down, or the other is pushed up. In such cases, the coincidence of part with part is sometimes so exact, that half of a broken pebble has been found on one side, and the other half five or six hundred feet below, on the other.

§ 14. The beds, however, which are to form mountains of any eminence are seldom divided in this gentle way. If brittle, one would think they had been broken as a captain's biscuit breaks, leaving sharp and ragged edges; and if tough, they appear to have been torn asunder very much like a piece of new cheese.

The beds which present the most definite appearances of abrupt fracture, are those of that gray or black limestone above described (Chap. x. § 4), formed into a number of thin layers or leaves, commonly separated by filmy spreadings of calcareous sand, hard when dry, but easily softened by moisture; the whole, considered as a mass, easily friable, though particular beds may be very thick and hard. Imagine a layer of such substance, three or four thousand feet thick, broken with a sharp crash through the middle, and one piece of it thrown up as in Fig. 11. It is evident that the first result of such a shock would be a complete shattering of the consistence of the broken edges, and that these would fall, some on the instant, and others tottering and crumbling away from time to time, until the cliff had got in some degree settled into a tenable form. The fallen fragments

would lie in a confused heap at the bottom, hiding perhaps one-half of its height, as in Fig. 12; the top of it, wrought into somewhat less ragged shape, would thence-

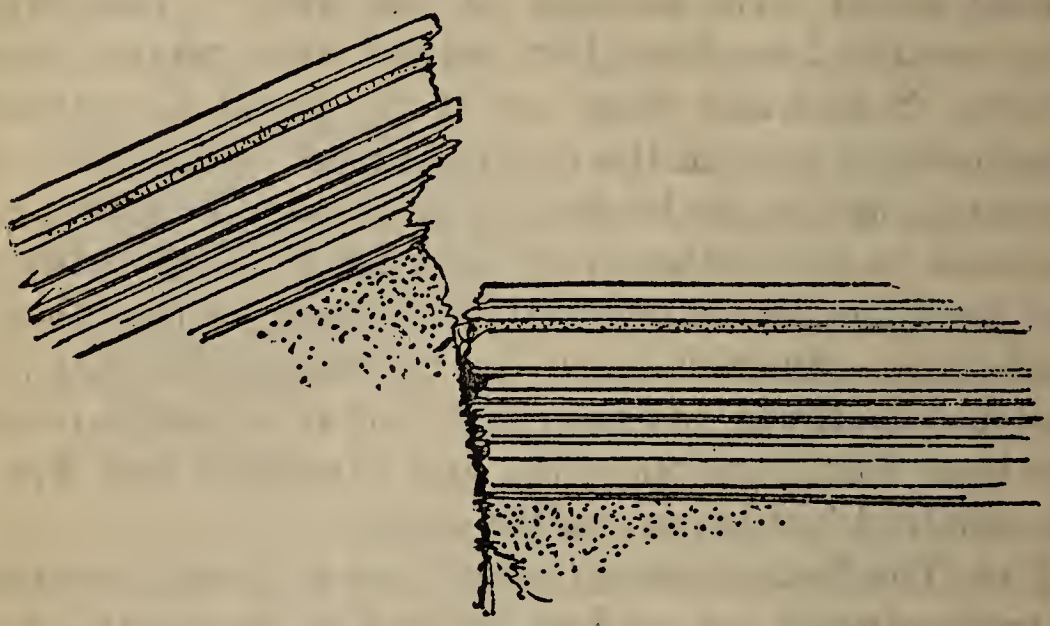


FIG. 11.

forth submit itself only to the gradual influences of time and storm.

I do not say that this operation has actually taken place. I merely say that such cliffs do in multitudes

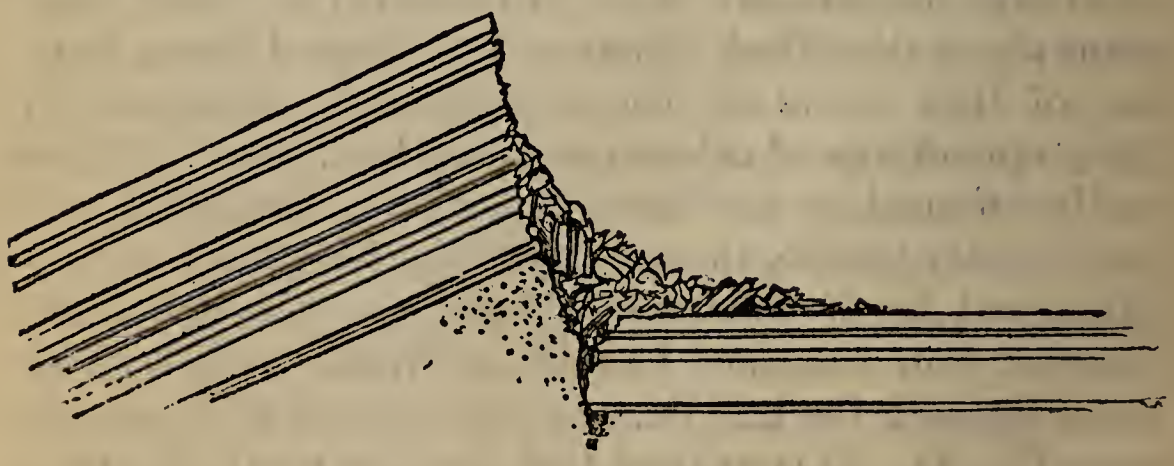


FIG. 12.

exist in the form shown at Fig. 12, or, more properly speaking, in that form modified by agencies in visible operation, whose work can be traced upon them, touch by touch. But the condition at Fig. 12 is the first rough

blocking out of their form, the primal state in which they demonstrably were, some thousands of years ago, but beyond which no human reason can trace them without danger of error. The cloud fastens upon them there.

§ 15. It is rare, however, that such a cliff as that represented in Fig. 12 can maintain itself long in such a contour. Usually it moulders gradually away into a steep mound or bank; and the larger number of bold cliffs are composed of far more solid rock, which in its general make is quite unshattered and flawless; apparently unaffected, as far as its coherence is concerned, by any shock it may have suffered in being raised to its position, or hewn into its form. Beds occur in the Alps composed of solid coherent limestone (such as that familiar to the English traveller in the cliffs of Matlock and Bristol), 3,000 or 4,000 feet thick, and broken short off throughout a great part of this thickness, forming nearly * sheer precipices not less than 1,500 or 2,000 feet in height, after all deduction has been made for slopes of débris at the bottom, and for rounded diminution at the top.

§ 16. The geologist plunges into vague suppositions and fantastic theories in order to account for these cliffs; but, after all that can be dreamed or discovered, they remain in great part inexplicable. If they were interiorly shattered, it would be easy to understand that, in their hardened condition, they had been broken violently asunder; but it is not easy to conceive a firm cliff of limestone broken through a thickness of 2,000 feet without showing a crack in any other part of it. If they were divided in a soft state, like that of paste, it is still less easy to understand how any such soft material could maintain itself, till it dried, in the form of a cliff so enormous and so ponderous: it must have flowed down

* *Nearly;* that is to say, not quite vertical. Of the degree of steepness, we shall have more to say hereafter.

from the top, or squeezed itself out in bulging protuberance at the base. But it has done neither; and we are left to choose between the suppositions that the mountain was created in a form approximating to that which it now wears, or that the shock which produced it was so violent and irresistible, as to do its work neatly in an instant, and cause no flaws to the rock except in the actual line of fracture. The force must have been analogous either to the light and sharp blow of the hammer with which one breaks a stone into two pieces as it lies in the hand, or the parting caused by settlement under great weight, like the cracks through the brickwork of a modern ill-built house. And yet the very beds which seem at the time they were broken to have possessed this firmness of consistency, are also bent throughout their whole body into waves, apparently following the action of the force that fractured them, like waves of sea under the wind. Truly the cloud lies darkly upon us here!

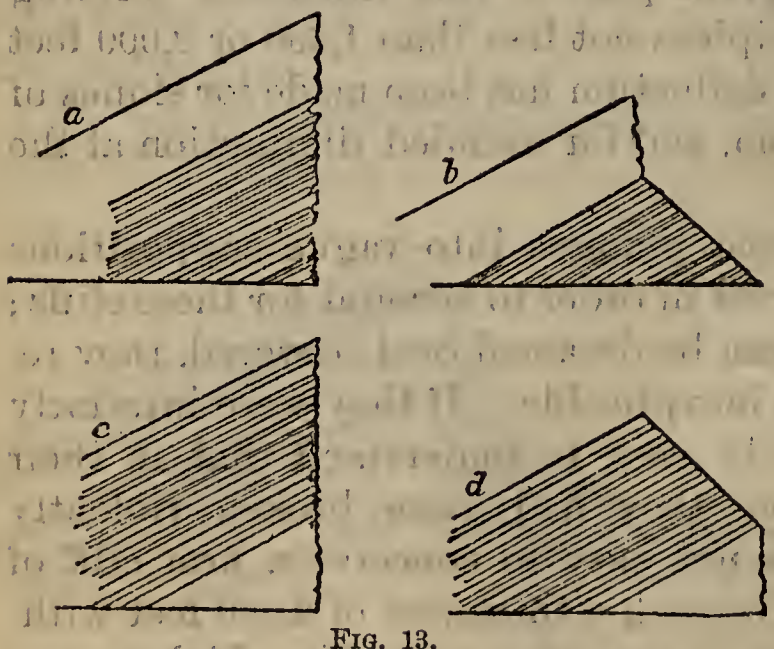


FIG. 13.

§ 17. And it renders these precipices more remarkable that there is in them no principle of compensation against destructive influences. They are not cloven back continually into new cliffs, as our chalk shores are by the sea; otherwise, one might attribute their first existence to the force of streams. But, on the contrary, the action of years upon them is now always one of deterioration. The increasing heap of fallen frag-

ments conceals more and more of their base, and the wearing of the rain lowers the height and softens the sternness of their brows, so that a great part of their terror has evidently been subdued by time; and the farther we endeavor to penetrate their history, the more mysterious are the forms we are required to explain.

§ 18. Hitherto, however, for the sake of clearness, we have spoken of hills as if they were composed of a single mass or volume of rock. It is very seldom that they are so. Two or three layers are usually raised at once, with certain general results on mountain form, which it is next necessary to examine.

The three great representative forms of stratified mountains.

1st. Suppose a series of beds raised in the condition *a*, Fig. 13, the lowest soft, the uppermost compact; it is evident that the lower beds would rapidly crumble away, and the compact mass above break for want of support, until the rocks beneath had reached a slope at which they could securely sustain themselves, as well as the weight of wall above, thus bringing the hill into the outline *b*.

1. Wall above slope.

2d. If, on the other hand, the hill were originally raised as at *c*, the softest beds being at the top, these would crumble into their smooth slope without affecting the outline of the mass below, and the hill would assume the form *d*, large masses of débris being in either of these two cases accumulated at the foot of the slope, or of the cliff. These first ruins might, by subsequent changes, be variously engulfed, carried away, or covered over, so as to leave nothing visible, or at least nothing notable, but the great cliff with its slope above or below it. Without insisting on the evidences or probabilities of such construction, it is sufficient to state that mountains of the two types, *b* and *d*, are exceedingly common in all parts of the world; and though of course confused with

2. Slope above wall.

others, and themselves always more or less imperfectly developed, yet they are, on the whole, singularly definite as classes of hills, examples of which can hardly but remain clearly impressed on the mind of every traveller. Of the first, *b*, Salisbury Crags, near Edinburgh, is a nearly perfect instance, though on a diminutive scale. The cliffs of Lauterbrunnen, in the Oberland, are almost without exception formed on the type *d*.

3. Slope and wall alternately.

3d. When the elevated mass, instead of consisting merely of two great divisions, includes alternately hard and soft beds, as at *a*, Fig. 14, the vertical cliffs and inclined banks alternate with each other, and the mountain rises on a series of steps, with receding slopes of turf or débris on the ledge of

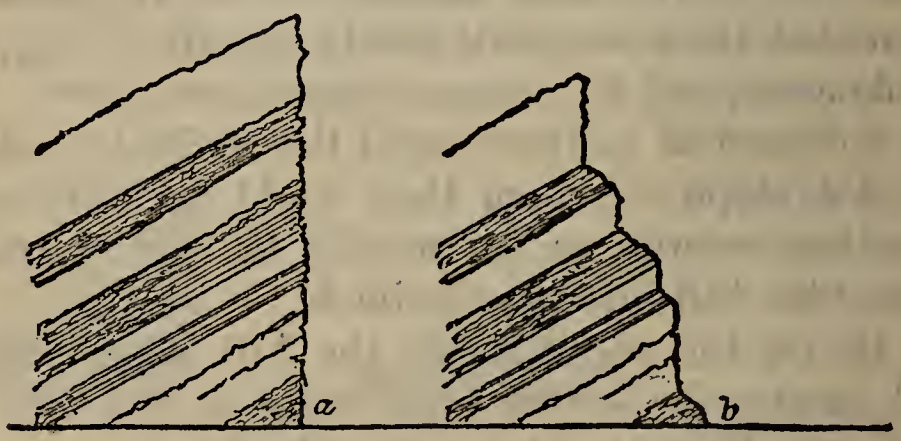


Fig. 14.

each, as at *b*. At the head of the valley of Sixt, in Savoy, huge masses of mountain connected with the Buet are thus constructed: their slopes are quite smooth, and composed of good pasture land, and the cliffs in many places literally vertical. In the summer the peasants make hay on the inclined pastures; and the hay is "carried" by merely binding the haycocks tight and rolling them down the slope and over the cliff, when I have heard them fall to the bank below, a height of from five to eight hundred feet, with a sound like the distant report of a heavy piece of artillery.

§ 19. The next point of importance in these beds is the curvature, to which, as well as to fracture, they seem to have been subjected. This curvature is not to be confounded with that rippling or undulating character of every portion of the slaty crystalline rocks above described. I am now speaking of all kinds of rocks indifferently;—not of their appearance in small pieces, but of their great contours in masses, thousands of feet thick. And it is almost universally true of these masses that they do not merely lie in flat superposition one over another, as the books in Fig. 8; but they lie in *waves*, more or less vast and sweeping according to the scale of the country, as in Fig. 15, where the distance from one

FIG. 15.

side of the figure to the other is supposed to be four or five leagues.

§ 20. Now, observe, if the precipices which we have just been describing had been broken when their substance was in a hard state, there appears no reason why any connection should be apparent between the energy of *undulation* and these *broken* rocks. If the continuous waves were caused by convulsive movements of the earth's surface while its substance was pliable, and were left in repose for so long a period as to become perfectly hard before they were broken into cliffs, there seems no reason why the second series of shocks should so closely have confined itself to the locality which had suffered the first, that the most abrupt precipices should always be associated with the wildest waves. We might have expected that sometimes we should have had noble cliffs

raised where the waves had been slight; and sometimes low and slight fractures where the waves had been violent. But this is not so. The contortions and fractures bear always such relation to each other as appears positively to imply contemporaneous formation. Through all the lowland districts of the world the average contour of the waves of rock is somewhat as represented in Fig.

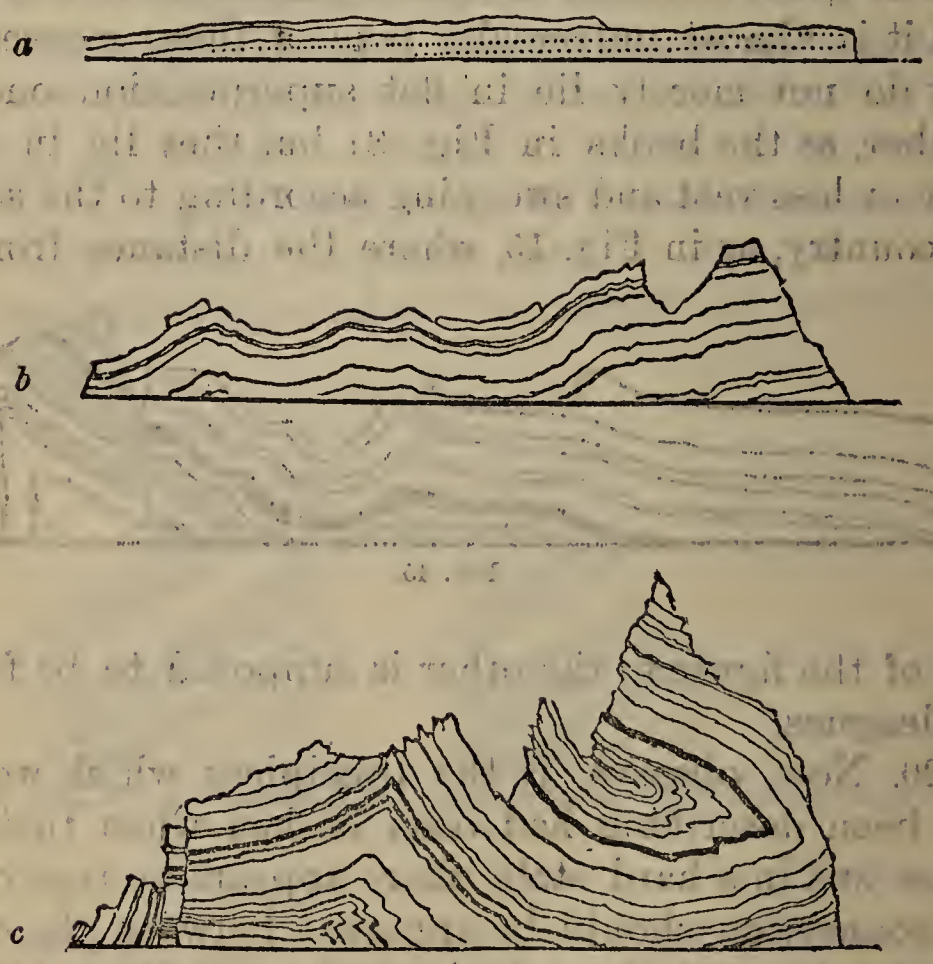


Fig. 16.

16 *a*, and the little cliffs or hills formed at the edges of the beds (whether by fracture, or, as oftener happens in such countries, by gradual washing away under the surge of ancient seas) are no higher, in proportion to the extent of surface, than the little steps seen in the centre of the figure. Such is the nature, and such the scale, of the ranges of hills which form our own downs and wolds, and the French coteaux beside their winding

rivers. But as we approach the hill countries, the undulation becomes more marked, and the crags more bold; so that almost any portion of such mountain ranges as the Jura or the Vosges will present itself under conditions such as those at *b*, the precipices at the edges being bolder in exact proportion to the violence of wave. And, finally, in the central and noblest chains the undulation becomes literally contortion; the beds occur in such positions as those at *c*, and the precipices are bold and terrific in exact proportion to this exaggerated and tremendous contortion.

§ 21. These facts appear to be just as contrary to the supposition of the mountains having been formed while the rocks were hard, as the considerations adduced in § 15 are to that of their being formed while they were soft. And I believe the more the reader revolves the subject in his thoughts, and the more opportunities he has of examining the existing facts, the less explicable those facts will become to him, and the more reverent will be his acknowledgment of the presence of the cloud.

For, as he examines more clearly the structure of the great mountain ranges, he will find that though invariably the boldest forms are associated with the most violent contortions, they sometimes *follow* the contortions, and sometimes appear entirely independent of them. For instance, in crossing the pass of the Tête Noire, if the traveller defers his journey till near the afternoon, so that from the top of the pass he may see the great limestone mountain in the Valais, called the Dent de Morcles, under the full evening light, he will observe that its peaks are hewn out of a group of contorted beds, as shown in Fig. 4, Plate 29. The wild and irregular zigzag of the beds, which traverse the face of the cliff with the irregularity of a flash of lightning, has apparently not the slightest influence on the outline of the

peak. It has been carved out of the mass, with no reference whatever to the interior structure. In like manner, as we shall see hereafter, the most wonderful peak in the whole range of the Alps seems to have been cut out of a series of nearly horizontal beds, as a square pillar of hay is cut out of a half-consumed haystack. And yet, on the other hand, we meet perpetually with instances in which the curves of the beds have in great part directed the shape of the whole mass of mountain. The gorge which leads from the village of Ardon, in the Valais, up to the root of the Diablerets, runs between two ranges of limestone hills, of which the rude contour is given in Fig. 17, page 199. The great slope seen on the left, rising about seven thousand feet above the ravine, is nothing but the back of one sheet of limestone, whose broken edge forms the first cliff at the top, a height of about six hundred feet, the second cliff being the edge of another bed emergent beneath it, and the slope beyond, the surface of a third. These beds of limestone all descend at a uniform inclination into the gorge, where they are snapped short off, the torrent cutting its way along the cleft, while the beds rise on the other side in a huge contorted wave, forming the ridge of mountains on the right,—a chain about seven miles in length, and from five thousand to six thousand feet in height. The actual order of the beds is seen in Fig. 18, and it is one of the boldest and clearest examples of the form of mountains being correspondent to the curves of beds which I have ever seen; it also exhibits a condition of the summits which is of constant occurrence in stratified hills, and peculiarly important as giving rise to the serrated structure, rendered classical by the Spaniards in their universal term for mountain ridges, Sierra, and obtaining for one of the most important members of the Comasque chain of Alps its well-known Italian name—Il Resegone. Such mountains are not

Fig. 17.

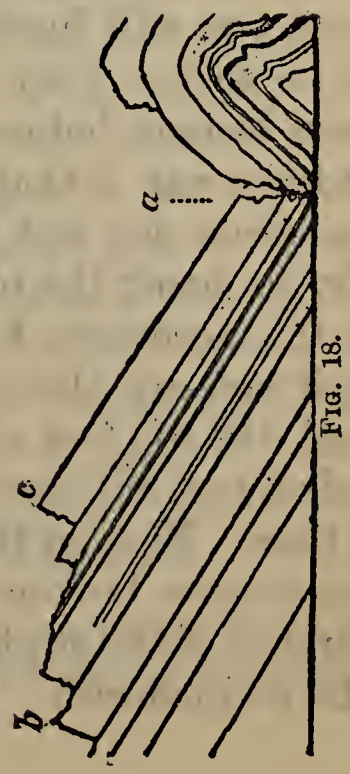


Fig. 18.

merely successions of irregular peaks, more or less resembling the edge of a much-hacked sword; they are orderly successions of teeth set in one direction, closely resembling those of a somewhat overworn saw, and nearly always produced by successive beds emerging one from beneath the other.

§ 22. In all such cases there is an infinitely greater difficulty in accounting for the forms than in explaining the fracture of a single bed. How, and when, and where, were the other portions carried away? Was each bed once continuous over a much larger space from the point where its edge is now broken off, or have such beds slipped back into some gulf behind them? It is very easy for geologists to speak generally of elevation and convulsion, but very difficult to explain what sort of convulsion it could be which passed forward from the edge of one bed to the edge of another, and broke the required portion off each without disturbing the rest. Try the experiment in the simplest way: put half a dozen of hard captain's biscuits in a sloping position on a table, and then try, as they lie, to break the edge of each, one by one, without disturbing the rest. At least, you will have to raise the edge before you can break it; to put your hand underneath, between it and the next biscuit, before you can get any purchase on it. What force was it that put its fingers between one bed of limestone 600 feet thick and the next beneath? If you try to break the biscuits by a blow from above, observe the necessary force of your blow, and then conceive, if you can, the sort of hammer that was required to break the 600 feet of rock through in the same way. But, also, you will, ten to one, break two biscuits at the same time. Now, in these serrated formations, two biscuits are *never* broken at the same time. There is no appearance of the slightest jar having taken place affecting the bed beneath. If there be, a huge cliff or gorge

is formed at that spot, not a sierra. Thus, in Fig. 18, the beds are affected throughout their united body by the shock which formed the ravine at *a*; but they are broken, one by one, into the cliffs at *b* and *c*. Sometimes one is tempted to think that they must have been slipped back, one from off the other; but there is never any appearance of friction having taken place on their exposed surfaces; in the plurality of instances their continuance or rise from their roots in waves (see Fig. 15 above) renders the thing utterly impossible; and in the few instances which have been known of such action actually taking place (which have always been on a small scale), the sliding bed has been torn into a thousand fragments almost as soon as it began to move.*

§ 23. And, finally, supposing a force found capable of breaking these beds in the manner required, what force was it that carried the fragments away? How were the gigantic fields of shattered marble conveyed from the ledges which were to remain exposed? No signs of violence are found on these ledges; what marks there are, the rain and natural decay have softly traced through a long series of years. Those very time-marks may have indeed effaced mere superficial appearances of convulsion; but could they have effaced all evidence of the action of such floods as would have been necessary to carry bodily away the whole ruin of a block of marble leagues in length and breadth, and a quarter of a mile thick? Ponder over the intense marvellousness of this. The bed at *c* (Fig. 18) must first be broken through the midst of it into a sharp precipice, without at all disturbing it elsewhere; and then all of it beyond *c* is to be broken up, and carried perfectly away, without disturbing or wearing down the face of the cliff at *c*.

* The Rossberg fall, compared to the convulsions which seem to have taken place in the higher Alps, is like the slip of a paving stone compared to the fall of a tower.

And yet no trace of the means by which all this was effected is left. The rock stands forth in its white and rugged mystery, as if its peak had been born out of the blue sky. The strength that raised it, and the sea that wrought upon it, have passed away, and left no sign; and we have no words wherein to describe their departure, no thoughts to form about their action, than those of the perpetual and unsatisfied interrogation,—

> "What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest?
> And ye mountains, that ye skipped like lambs?"

CHAPTER XIII.

OF THE SCULPTURE OF MOUNTAINS:—SECONDLY, THE CENTRAL PEAKS.

§ 1. In the 20th paragraph of the last chapter, it was noticed that ordinarily the most irregular contortions or fractures of beds of rock were found in the districts of most elevated hills, the contortion of fracture thus appearing to be produced at the moment of elevation. It has also previously been stated that the hardness and crystalline structure of the material increased with the mountainous character of the ground; so that we find as almost invariably correlative, the *hardness* of the rock, its *distortion*, and its *height;* and, in like manner, its *softness*, *regularity* of *position*, and *lowness*. Thus, the line of beds in an English range of down, composed of soft chalk which crumbles beneath the fingers, will be as low and continuous as in *a* of Fig. 16 (p. 196); the beds in the Jura mountains, composed of firm limestone, which needs a heavy hammer stroke to break it, will be as high and wavy as at *b;* and the ranges of Alps, composed of slaty crystallines, yielding only to steel wedges or to gunpowder, will be as lofty and as wild in structure as at *c*. Without this beneficent connection of hardness of material with height, mountain ranges either could not have existed, or would not have been habitable. In their present magnificent form, they could not have existed; and whatever their forms, the frequent falls and crumblings away, which are of little conse-

quence in the low crags of Hastings, Dover, or Lyme, would have been fatal to the population of the valleys beneath, when they took place from heights of eight or ten thousand feet.

§ 2. But this hardening of the material would not have been sufficient, by itself, to secure the safety of the inhabitants. Unless the reader has been already familiarized with geological facts, he must surely have been struck by the prominence of the *bedded* structure in all the instances of mountain form given in the preceding chapter; and must have asked himself, Why are mountains always built in this masonry-like way, rather than in compact masses? Now, it is true that according to present geological theories, the bedded structure was a necessary consequence of the mode in which the materials were accumulated; but it is not less true that this bedded structure is now the principal means of securing the stability of the mass, and is to be regarded as a beneficent appointment, with such special view. That structure compels each mountain to assume the safest contour of which under the given circumstances of upheaval it is capable. If it were all composed of an amorphous mass of stone as at A, Fig. 19, a crack beginning from the top, as at x in A, might gradually extend downwards in the direction $x\ y$ in B, until the whole mass, indicated by the shade, separated itself and fell. But when the whole mountain is arranged in beds, as at C, the crack beginning at the top stops in the uppermost bed, or, if it extends to the next, it will be in a different place, and the detached blocks, marked by the shaded portions, are of course still as secure in their positions as before the crack took place. If, indeed, the beds sloped towards the precipice, as at D, the danger would be greater; but if the reader looks to any of the examples of mountain form hitherto given, he will find that the universal tendency of the modes of elevation is to

cause the beds to slope *away* from the precipice, and to build the whole mountain in the form C, which affords the utmost possible degree of security. Nearly all the mountains which rise immediately above thickly peopled districts, though they may appear to be thrown into isolated peaks, are in reality nothing more than flattish ranks of rock, terminated by walls of cliff, of this perfectly safe kind; and it will be part of our task in

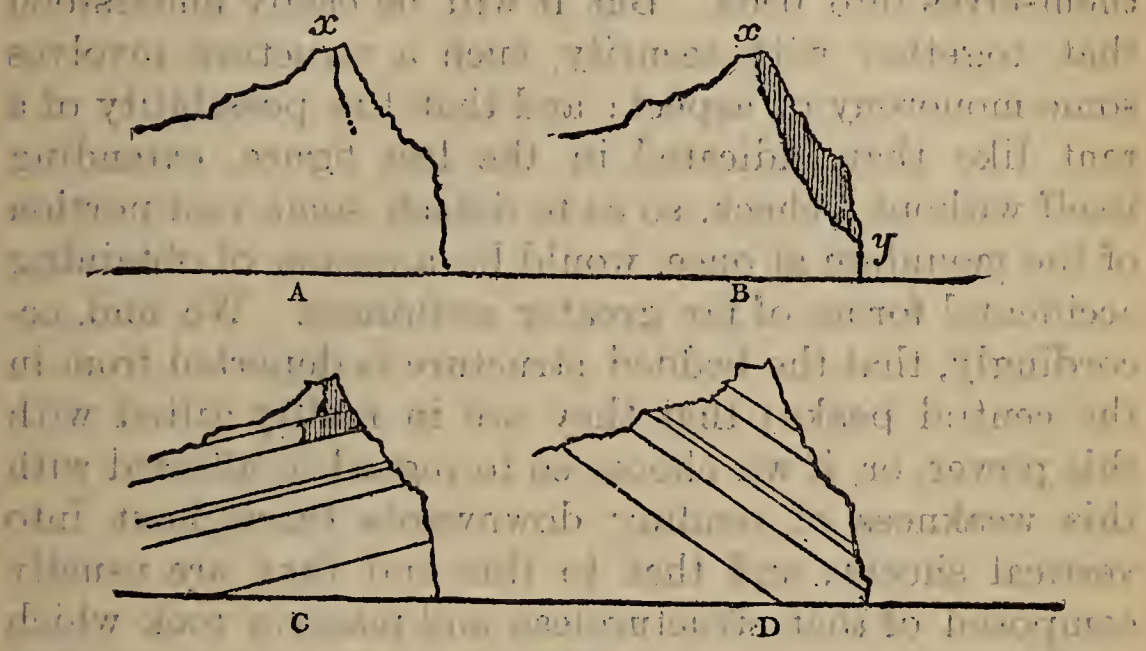


FIG. 19.

the succeeding chapter to examine at some length the modes in which sublime and threatening forms are almost deceptively assumed by arrangements of mountain which are in themselves thus simple and secure.

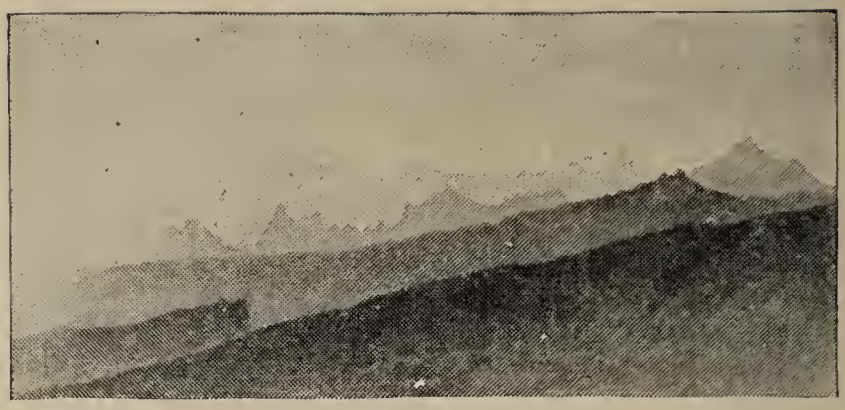
§ 3. It, however, fell within the purpose of the Great Builder to give, in the highest peaks of mountains, examples of form more strange and majestic than any which could be attained by structures so beneficently adapted to the welfare of the human race. And the admission of other modes of elevation, more terrific and less secure, takes place exactly in proportion to the increasing presence of such conditions in the locality as shall render it on other grounds unlikely to be inhabited, or incapable of being so. Where the soil is rich

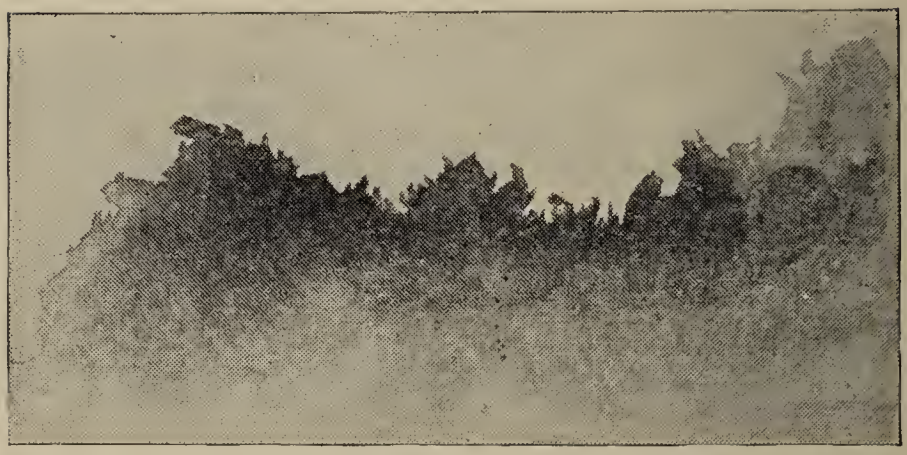
and the climate soft, the hills are low and safe; * as the ground becomes poorer and the air keener, they rise into forms of more peril and pride; and their utmost terror is shown only where their fragments fall on trackless ice, and the thunder of their ruin can be heard but by the ibex and the eagle.

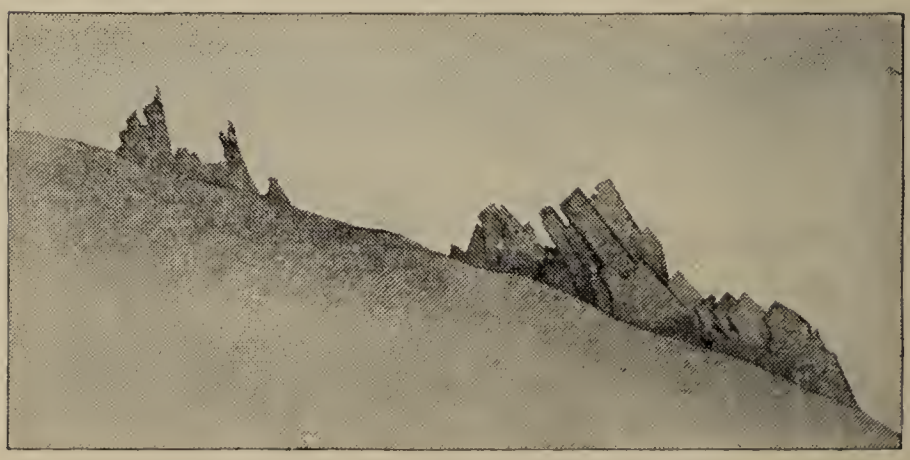
§ 4. The safety of the lower mountains depends, as has just been observed, on their tendency to divide themselves into beds. But it will be easily understood that, together with security, such a structure involves some monotony of aspect; and that the possibility of a rent like that indicated in the last figure, extending itself without a check, so as to detach some vast portion of the mountain at once, would be a means of obtaining accidental forms of far greater awfulness. We find, accordingly, that the bedded structure is departed from in the central peaks; that they are in reality gifted with this power, or, if we choose so to regard it, affected with this weakness of rending downwards throughout into vertical sheets; and that to this end they are usually composed of that structureless and massive rock which we have characterized by the term "compact crystalline."

§ 5. This, indeed, is not universal. It happens sometimes that toward the centre of great hill ranges ordinary stratified rocks of the coherent groups are hardened into more compact strength than is usual with them; and out of the hardened mass a peak, or range of peaks, is cut as if out of a single block. Thus the well-known Dent du Midi of Bex, a mountain of peculiar interest to the English travellers who crowd the various

* It may be thought I should have reversed these sentences, and written where the hills are low and safe, the climate is soft, &c. But it is not so. No antecedent reason can be shown why the Mount Cervin or Finsteraarhorn should not have risen sharp out of the plains of Lombardy, instead of out of glaciers.







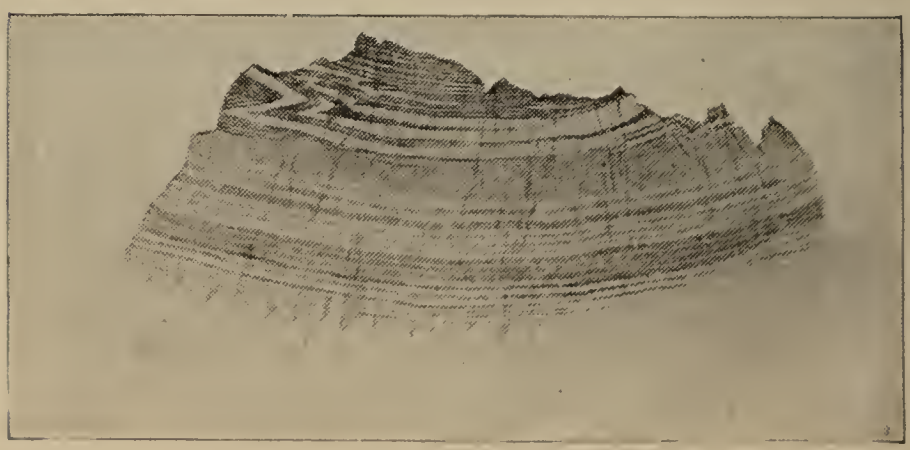


PLATE XXIX.—AIGUILLE STRUCTURE.

inns and pensions which now glitter along the shores of the Lake of Geneva at Vevay, Clarens, and Montreux, is cut out of horizontal beds of rock which are traceable in the evening light by their dark and light lines along its sides, like courses of masonry; the real form of the mountain being that of the ridge of a steep house-roof, jagged and broken at the top, so that, seen from near St. Maurice, the extremity of the ridge appears a sharp pyramid. The Dent de Morcles, opposite the Dent du Midi, has been already noticed, and is figured in Plate 29, Fig. 4. In like manner, the Matterhorn is cut out of a block of nearly horizontal beds of gneiss. But in all these cases the materials are so hardened and knit together that to all intents and purposes they form one solid mass, and when the forms are to be of the boldest character possible, this solid mass is unstratified, and of compact crystalline rock.

§ 6. In looking from Geneva in the morning light, when Mont Blanc and its companion hills are seen dark against the dawn, almost every traveller must have been struck by the notable range of jagged peaks which bound the horizon immediately to the northeast of Mont Blanc. In ordinary weather they appear a single chain, but if any clouds or mists happen to float into the heart of the group, it divides itself into two ranges, lower and higher, as in Fig. 1, Plate 29, of which the uppermost and more distant chain is the real crest of the Alps, and the lower and darker line is composed of subordinate peaks which form the south side of the valley of Chamouni, and are therefore ordinarily known as the "Aiguilles of Chamouni."

Though separated by some eight or nine miles of actual distance, the two ranges are part of one and the same system of rock. They are both of them most notable examples of the structure of the compact crystalline peaks and their jagged and spiry outlines are rendered

still more remarkable in any view obtained of them in the immediate neighborhood of Geneva, by their rising, as in the figure, over two long slopes of comparatively flattish mountain. The highest of these is the back of a stratified limestone range, distant about twenty-five miles, whose precipitous extremity, nodding over the little village of St. Martin's, is well known under the name of the Aiguille de Varens. The nearer line is the edge of another limestone mountain, called the Petit Salève, within five miles of Geneva. And thus we have two ranges of the crystalline rocks opposed to two ranges of the coherents, both having their distinctive characters, the one of vertical fracture, the other of level continuousness, developed on an enormous scale. I am aware of no other view in Europe, where the essential characteristics of the two formations are so closely and graphically displayed.

§ 7. Nor can I imagine any person thoughtfully regarding the more distant range, without feeling his curiosity strongly excited as to the method of its first sculpture. That long banks and fields of rock should be raised aslope, and break at their edges into cliffs, however mysterious the details of the operation may be, is yet conceivable in the main circumstances without any great effort of imagination. But the carving of those great obelisks and spires out of an infinitely harder rock; the sculpture of all the fretted pinnacles on the inaccessible and calm elevation of that great cathedral,—how and when was this wrought? It is necessary, before the extent and difficulty of such a question can be felt, to explain more fully the scale and character of the peaks under consideration.

§ 8. The valley of Chamouni, largely viewed, and irrespectively of minor ravines and irregularities, is nothing more than a deep trench, dug between two ranges of nearly continuous mountains,—dug with a straightness

and evenness which render its scenery, in some respects, more monotonous than that of any other Alpine valley. On each side it is bordered by banks of turf, darkened with pine forest, rising at an even slope to a height of about 3,000 feet, so that it may best be imagined as a kind of dry moat, which, if cut across, would be of the form typically shown in Fig. 20; the sloping bank on each side being about 3,000 feet high, or the moat about three-fifths of a mile in vertical depth. Then, on the top of the bank, on each side, and a little way back from the edge of the moat, rise the ranges of the great mountains, in the form of shattered crests and pyramids of barren rock sprinkled with snow. Those on the south side of the valley rise another 3,000 feet above the bank on which they stand, so that each of the masses superadded in Fig. 21 may best be described as a sort of Egyptian pyramid,* of the height of Snowden or Ben Lomond, hewn out of solid rock, and set on the shoulder of the great bank which borders the valley. Then the Mont Blanc, a higher and heavier cluster of such summits, loaded with deep snow, terminates the range. Glaciers of greater or less extent descend between the pyra-

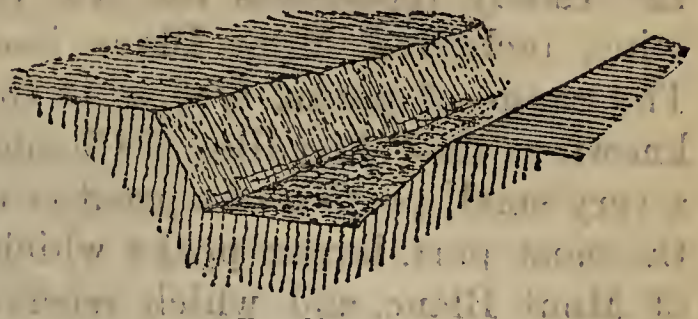


Fig. 20.

Fig. 21.

* I use the terms "pyramid" and "peak" at present, in order to give a rough general idea of the aspect of these hills. Both terms, as we shall see in the next chapter, are to be accepted under limitation.

mids of rock; and one, supplied from their largest recesses, even runs down the bank into the valley. Fig. 22* rudely represents the real contours of the mountains, including Mont Blanc itself, on its south side. The range of peaks, *b*, *p*, *m*, is that already spoken of, known as the "Aiguilles of Chamouni." They form but a very small portion of a great crowd of similar, and, for the most part, larger peaks which constitute the chain of Mont Blanc, and which receive from the Savoyards the name of Aiguilles, or needles, in consequence of their peculiarly sharp summits. The forms of these Aiguilles, wonderful enough in themselves, are, nevertheless, perpetually exaggerated both by the imagination of the traveller, and by the artists whose delineations of them find most frank acceptance. Fig. 1 in Plate 30 is faithfully copied from the representation given of one of these mountains in a plate lately published at Geneva. Fig. 2 in the same plate is a true outline of the mountain itself. Of the exaggerations in the other I shall have more to say presently; meantime, I refer to it merely as a proof that I am not myself exaggerating, in giving Fig. 22 as showing the general characters of these peaks.

§ 9. This, then, is the problem to be considered,—How mountains of such rugged and precipitous outline, and at the least 3,000 feet in height, were originally carved out of the hardest rocks, and set in their present position on the top of the green and sloping bank which sustains them.

* This coarse sketch is merely given for reference, as I shall often have to speak of the particular masses of mountain, indicated by the letters in the outline below it; namely—

b. Aiguille Blaitière.
p. Aiguille du Plan.
m. Aiguille du Midi.
M. Mont Blanc (summit).
d. Dôme du Goûté.
g. Aiguille du Goûté.
q and *r* indicate stations only.
T. Tapia.
C. Montagne de la Côte.
t. Montagne de Taconay.

"By mere accident," the reader replies. "The uniform bank might as easily have been the highest, and the broken granite peaks have risen from its sides, or

FIG. 22.

at the bottom of it. It is merely the chance formation of the valley of Chamouni."

Nay; not so. Although, as if to bring the problem more clearly before the thoughts of men, by marking the structure most where the scenery is most attractive, the formation is more distinct at Chamouni than anywhere

else in the Alpine chain; yet the general condition of a rounded bank sustaining jagged or pyramidal peaks is more or less traceable throughout the whole district of the great mountains. The most celebrated spot, next to the valley of Chamouni, is the centre of the Bernese Oberland; and it will be remembered by all travellers that in its principal valley, that of Grindelwald, not only does the summit of the Wetterhorn consist of a sharp pyramid raised on the advanced shoulder of a great promontory, but the two most notable summits of the Bernese Alps, the Schreckhorn and Finsteraarhorn, cannot be seen from the valley at all, being thrown far back upon an elevated plateau, of which only the advanced head or shoulder, under the name of the Mettenberg, can be seen from the village. The real summits, consisting in each case of a ridge starting steeply from this elevated plateau, as if by a new impulse of angry or ambitious mountain temper, can only be seen by ascending a considerable height upon the flank of the opposite mass of the Faulhorn.

§ 10. And this is, if possible, still more notably and provokingly the case with the great peaks of the chain of Alps between Monte Rosa and Mont Blanc. It will be seen, by a glance at any map of Switzerland, that the district which forms the canton Valais is, in reality, nothing but a ravine sixty miles long, between that central chain and the Alps of the cantons Fribourg and Berne. This ravine is also, in its general structure, merely a deeper and wider *moat* than that already described as forming the valley of Chamouni. It lies, in the same manner, between two *banks* of mountain; and the principal peaks are precisely in the same manner set back upon the tops of these banks; and so provokingly far back, that throughout the whole length of the valley not one of the summits of the chief chain can be seen from it. That usually pointed out to travellers as

Monte Rosa is a subordinate, though still very colossal mass, called the Montagne de Saas; and this is the only peak of great size discoverable from the valley throughout its extent; one or two glimpses of the snows, not at any eminent point, being caught through the entrances of the lateral valleys of Evolena, &c.

§ 11. Nor is this merely the consequence of the great *distance* of the central ridge. It would be intelligible enough that the mountains should rise gradually higher and higher towards the middle of the chain, so that the

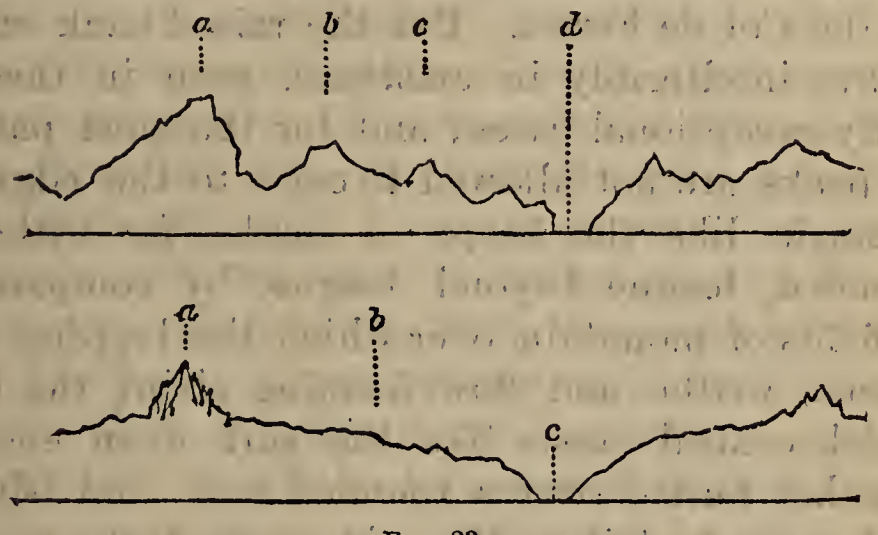


FIG. 23.

summit at *a* in the upper diagram of Fig. 23 should be concealed by the intermediate eminences *b*, *c*, from the valley at *d*. But this is not, by any means, the manner in which the concealment is effected. The great peaks stand, as at *a* in the lower diagram, jagged, sharp, and suddenly starting out of a comparatively tame mass of elevated land, through which the trench of the valley of the Rhone is cut, as at *c*. The subdivision of the bank at *b* by thousands of ravines, and its rise, here and there, into more or less notable summits, conceal the real fact of the structure from a casual observer. But the longer I stayed among the Alps, and the more closely I examined them, the more I was struck by the

one broad fact of their being a vast Alpine plateau, or mass of elevated land, upon which nearly all the highest peaks stood like children set upon a table, removed, in most cases, far back from the edge of the plateau, as if for fear of their falling. And the most majestic scenes in the Alps are produced, not so much by any violation of this law, as by one of the great peaks having apparently walked to the edge of the table to look over, and thus showing itself suddenly above the valley in its full height. This is the case with the Wetterhorn and Eiger at Grindelwald, and with the Grande Jorasse, above the Col de Ferret. But the raised bank or table is always intelligibly in existence, even in these apparently exceptional cases; and, for the most part, the great peaks are not allowed to come to the edge of it, but remain like the keeps of castles far withdrawn, surrounded, league beyond league, by comparatively level fields of mountain, over which the lapping sheets of glacier writhe and flow, foaming about the feet of the dark central crests like the surf of an enormous sea-breaker hurled over a rounded rock, and islanding some fragment of it in the midst. And the result of this arrangement is a kind of division of the whole of Switzerland into an upper and lower mountain-world; the lower world consisting of rich valleys bordered by steep, but easily accessible, wooded banks of mountain, more or less divided by ravines, through which glimpses are caught of the higher Alps; the upper world, reached after the first steep banks, of 3,000 or 4,000 feet in height, have been surmounted, consisting of comparatively level but most desolate tracts of moor and rock, half covered by glacier, and stretching to the feet of the true pinnacles of the chain.

§ 12. It can hardly be necessary to point out the perfect wisdom and kindness of this arrangement, as a provision for the safety of the inhabitants of the high

mountain regions. If the great peaks rose at once from the deepest valleys, every stone which was struck from their pinnacles, and every snow-wreath which slipped from their ledges, would descend at once upon the inhabitable ground, over which no year could pass without recording some calamity of earth-slip or avalanche; while, in the course of their fall, both the stones and the snow would strip the woods from the hill-sides, leaving only naked channels of destruction where there are now the sloping meadow and the chestnut glade. Besides this, the masses of snow, cast down at once into the warmer air, would all melt rapidly in the spring, causing furious inundation of every great river for a month or six weeks. The snow being then all thawed, except what lay upon the highest peaks in regions of nearly perpetual frost, the rivers would be supplied, during the summer, only by fountains, and the feeble tricklings on sunny days from the high snows. The Rhone under such circumstances would hardly be larger at Lyons than the Severn at Shrewsbury, and many Swiss valleys would be left almost without moisture. All these calamities are prevented by the peculiar Alpine structure which has been described. The broken rocks and the sliding snow of the high peaks, instead of being dashed at once to the vales, are caught upon the desolate shelves or shoulders which everywhere surround the central crests. The soft banks which terminate these shelves, traversed by no falling fragments, clothe themselves with richest wood; while the masses of snow heaped upon the ledge above them, in a climate neither so warm as to thaw them quickly in the spring, nor so cold as to protect them from all the power of the summer sun, either form themselves into glaciers, or remain in slowly wasting fields even to the close of the year,—in either case supplying constant, abundant, and regular streams to the villages and

pastures beneath, and, to the rest of Europe, noble and navigable rivers.

§ 13. Now, that such a structure is the best and wisest possible, is, indeed, sufficient reason for its existence; and to many people it may seem useless to question farther respecting its origin. But I can hardly conceive any one standing face to face with one of these towers of central rock, and yet not also asking himself, Is this indeed the actual first work of the Divine Master on which I gaze? Was the great precipice shaped by His finger, as Adam was shaped out of the dust? Were its clefts and ledges carved upon it by its Creator, as the letters were on the Tables of the Law, and was it thus left to bear its eternal testimony to His beneficence among these clouds of heaven? Or is it the descendant of a long race of mountains, existing under appointed laws of birth and endurance, death and decrepitude?

§ 14. There can be no doubt as to the answer. The rock itself answers audibly by the murmur of some falling stone or rending pinnacle. It is *not* as it was once. Those waste leagues around its feet are loaded with the wrecks of what it was. On these, perhaps, of all mountains, the characters of decay are written most clearly; around these are spread most gloomily the memorials of their pride, and the signs of their humiliation.

"What then were they once?"

The only answer is yet again,—"Behold the cloud."

Their form, as far as human vision can trace it, is one of eternal decay. No retrospection can raise them out of their ruins, or withdraw them beyond the law of their perpetual fate. Existing science may be challenged to form, with the faintest color of probability, any conception of the original aspect of a crystalline mountain; it cannot be followed in its elevation, nor traced in its connection with its fellows. No eyes ever "saw its substance, yet being imperfect;" its history is a monotone

of endurance and destruction: all that we can certainly know of it, is that it was once greater than it is now, and it only gathers vastness, and still gathers, as it fades into the abyss of the unknown.

§ 15. Yet this one piece of certain evidence ought not to be altogether unpursued; and while, with all humility, we shrink from endeavoring to theorize respecting processes which are concealed, we ought not to refuse to follow, as far as it will lead us, the course of thought which seems marked out by conspicuous and consistent phenomena. Exactly as the form of the lower mountains seems to have been produced by certain raisings and bendings of their formerly level beds, so the form of these higher mountains seems to have been produced by certain breakings away from their former elevated mass. If the process appears in either case doubtful, it is less so with respect to the higher hills. We may not easily believe that the steep limestone cliffs on one side of a valley, now apparently secure and steadfast, ever were united with the cliffs on the other side; but we cannot hesitate to admit that the peak which we see shedding its flakes of granite, on all sides of it, as a fading rose lets fall its leaves, was once larger than it is, and owes the present characters of its forms chiefly to the modes of its diminution.

§ 16. Holding fast this clew, we have next to take into consideration another fact of not less importance,—that over the whole of the rounded banks of lower mountain, wherever they have been in anywise protected from the injuries of time, there are yet visible the tracks of ancient glaciers. I will not here enter into detail respecting the mode in which traces of glaciers are distinguishable. It is enough to state that the footmark, so to speak, of a glacier is just as easily recognizable as the trail of any well-known animal; and that with as much confidence as we should feel in asserting that a horse had passed along

a soft road which yet retained the prints of its shoes, it may be concluded that the glaciers of the Alps had once triple or quadruple the extent that they have now; so that not only the banks of inferior mountains were once covered with sheets of ice, but even the great valley of the Rhone itself was the bed of an enormous "Mer de Glace," which extended beyond the Lake of Geneva to the slopes of Jura.*

§ 17. From what has already been noted of glacier action, the reader cannot but be aware that its universal effect is to round and soften the contours of the mountains subjected to it; so that a glacier may be considered as a vast instrument of friction, a white sand-paper, applied slowly but irresistibly to all the roughnesses of the hill which it covers. And this effect is of course greatest when the ice flows fastest, and contains more embedded stones; that is to say, greater towards the lower part of a mountain than near its summit.

Suppose now a chain of mountains raised in any accidental form, only of course highest where the force was greatest,—that is to say, at the centre of the chain,—and presenting any profile such as *a*, Fig. 24; terminated, perhaps, by a broken secondary cliff, and the whole covered with a thick bed of glacier, indicated by the spotted space, and moving in the direction of the arrows. As it wears away the mountain, not at all at the top, but always more and more as it descends, it would in process of time reduce the contour of the flank of the hill to the form at *b*. But at this point the snow would begin to slide from the central peak, and to leave its rocks exposed to the action of the atmosphere. Supposing those rocks disposed to break into vertical sheets, the summit would

* The glacier tracks on the gneiss of the great angle opposite Martigny are the most magnificent I ever saw in the Alps; those above the channel of the Trient, between Valorsine and the valley of the Rhone, the most interesting.

soon cleave itself into such a form as that at *x*; and the flakes again subdividing and falling, we should have conditions such as at *y*. Meanwhile the glacier is still doing its work uninterruptedly on the lower bank, bringing

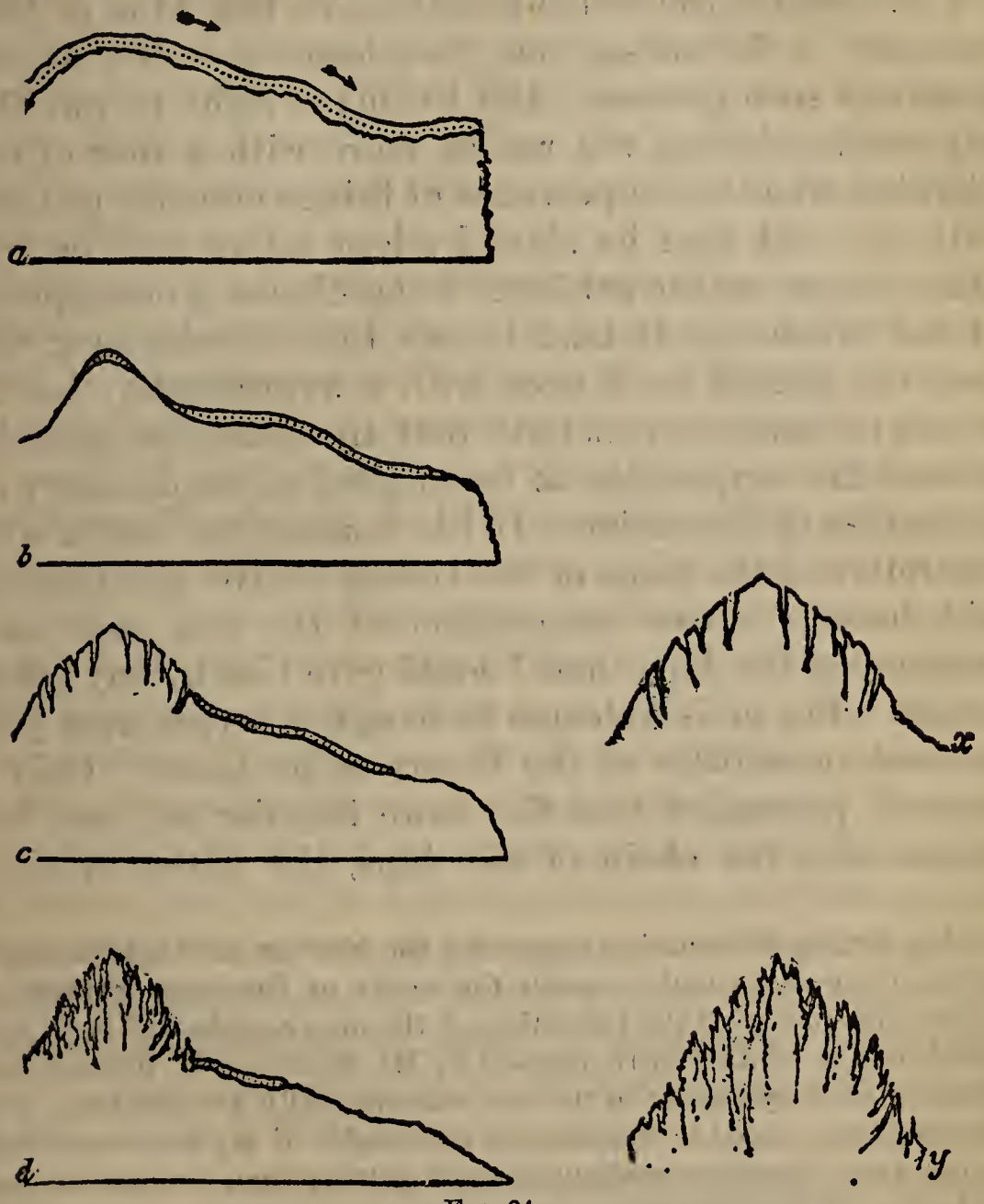


FIG. 24.

the mountain successively into the outlines *c* and *d*, in which the forms *x* and *y* are substituted consecutively for the original summit. But the level of the whole flank of the mountain being now so much reduced, the glacier has brought itself by its own work into warmer climate,

and has wrought out its own destruction. It would gradually be thinned away, and in many places at last vanish, leaving only the barren rounded mountains, and the tongues of ice still supplied from the peaks above.

§ 18. Such is the actual condition of the Alps at this moment. I do not say that they have in reality undergone any such process. But I think it right to put the supposition before the reader, more with a view of explaining what the appearance of things actually is, than with any wish that he should adopt either this or any other theory on the subject. It facilitates a description of the Brèche de Roland to say, that it looks as if the peer had indeed cut it open with a swordstroke; but it would be unfair to conclude that the describer gravely wished the supposition to be adopted as explanatory of the origin of the ravine. In like manner, the reader who has followed the steps of the theory I have just offered, will have a clearer conception of the real look and anatomy of the Alps than I could give him by any other means. But he is welcome to accept in seriousness just as much or as little of the theory as he likes.* Only I am well persuaded that the more familiar any one becomes with the chain of the Alps, the more, whether

* For farther information respecting the glaciers and their probable action, the reader should consult the works of Professor Forbes. I believe this theory of the formation of the upper peaks has been proposed by him, and recently opposed by Mr. Sharpe, who believes that the great bank spoken of in the text was originally a sea-bottom. But I have simply stated in this chapter the results of my own watchings of the Alps; for being without hope of getting time for available examination of the voluminous works on these subjects, I thought it best to read nothing (except Forbes's most important essay on the glaciers, several times quoted in the text), and therefore to give, at all events, the force of independent witness to such impressions as I received from the actual facts; De Saussure, always a faithful recorder of those facts, and my first master in geology, being referred to, occasionally, for information respecting localities I had not been able to examine.

voluntarily or not, the idea will force itself upon him of their being mere remnants of large masses,—splinters and fragments, as of a stranded wreck, the greater part of which has been removed by the waves; and the more he will be convinced of the existence of two distinct regions, one, as it were, below the ice, another above it,—one of subjected, the other of emergent rock; the lower worn away by the action of the glaciers and rains, the higher splintering and falling to pieces by natural disintegration.

§ 19. I press, however, neither conjecture nor inquiry farther; having already stated all that is necessary to give the reader a complete idea of the different divisions of mountain form. I proceed now to examine the points of pictorial interest in greater detail; and in order to do so more conveniently, I shall adopt the order, in description, which Nature seems to have adopted in formation; beginning with the mysterious hardness of the central crystallines, and descending to the softer and lower rocks which we see in some degree modified by the slight forces still in operation. We will therefore examine: 1. the pictorial phenomena of the central peaks; 2. those of the summits of the lower mountains round them, to which we shall find it convenient to give the distinguishing name of crests; 3. the formation of Precipices, properly so called; then, the general aspect of the Banks and Slopes, produced by the action of water or of falling débris, on the sides or at the bases of the mountains; and finally, remove, if it may be, a few of the undeserved scorns thrown upon our most familiar servants, Stones. To each of these subjects we shall find it necessary to devote a distinct chapter.

CHAPTER XIV.

RESULTING FORMS:—FIRST, AIGUILLES.

§ 1. I HAVE endeavored in the preceding chapters always to keep the glance of the reader on the broad aspect of things, and to separate for him the mountain masses into the most distinctly comprehensible forms. We must now consent to take more pains, and observe more closely.

§ 2. I begin with the Aiguilles. In Fig. 24, p. 219, at *a*, it was assumed that the mass was raised highest merely where the elevating force was greatest, being of one substance with the bank or cliff below. But it hardly ever *is* of the same substance. Almost always it is of compact crystallines, and the bank of slaty crystallines; or if it be of slaty crystallines the bank is of slaty coherents. The bank is almost always the softer of the two.*

Is not this very marvellous? Is it not exactly as if the substance had been prepared soft or hard with a sculpturesque view to what had to be done with it; soft, for the glacier to mould, and the torrent to divide; hard, to stand for ever, central in mountain majesty.

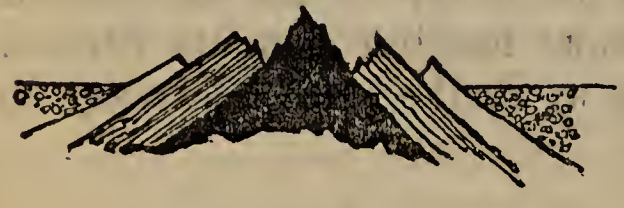


FIG. 25.

§ 3. Next, then, comes the question, How do these compact crystallines and slaty crystallines join each other? It has long been a well-recognized fact in the science of geology, that the most

* See, for explanatory statements, Appendix 2.

important mountain ranges lift up and sustain upon their sides the beds of rock which form the inferior groups of hills around them in the manner roughly shown in the section Fig. 25, where the dark mass stands for the hard rock of the great mountains (crystallines), and the lighter lines at the side of it indicate the prevalent direction of the beds in the neighboring hills (coherents), while the spotted portions represent the gravel and sand of which the great plains are usually composed. But it has not been so universally recognized, though long ago pointed out by De Saussure, that the great central groups are often themselves composed of beds lying in a precisely opposite direction; so that if we analyze carefully the structure of the dark mass in the centre of Fig. 25, we shall find it arranged in lines which slope downwards to the centre; the flanks of it being of slaty crystalline rock, and the summit of compact crystallines, as at *a*, Fig. 26.

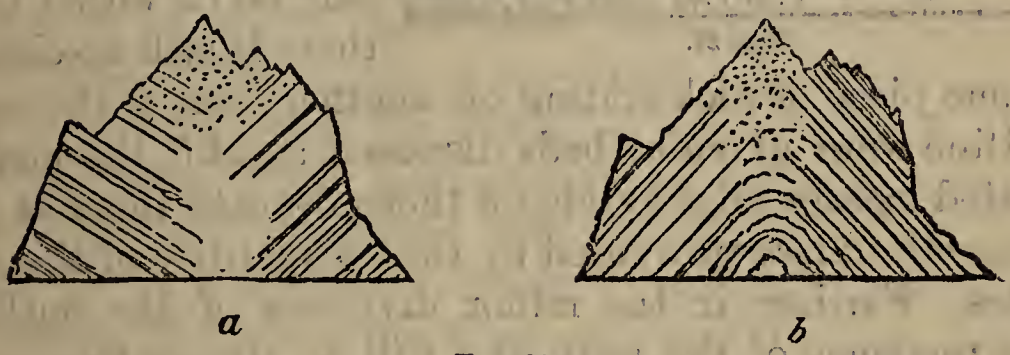


FIG. 26.

In speaking of the sculpture of the central peaks in the last chapter, I made no reference to the *nature* of the rocks in the banks on which they stood. The diagram at *a*, Fig. 27, as representative of the original condition, and *b*, of the resultant condition will, compared with Fig. 24, p. 219, more completely illustrate the change.*

* I have been able to examine these conditions with much care in the chain of Mont Blanc only, which I chose for the subject of investigation both as being the most interesting to the general traveller,

§ 4. By what secondary laws this structure may ultimately be discovered to have been produced is of no consequence to us at present; all that it is needful for us to note is the beneficence which appointed it for the mountains destined to assume the boldest forms. For into whatever outline they may be sculptured by violence or time, it is evident at a glance that their stability and security must always be the greatest possible under the given circumstances. Suppose, for instance, that the peak is in such a form as *a* in Fig. 26, then, however steep the slope may be on either side, there is still no chance of one piece of rock sliding off another; but if the same outline were given to beds disposed as at *b*, the unsupported masses might slide off those beneath them at any moment, unless prevented by the inequalities of the surfaces. Farther, in the minor divisions of the outline, the tendency of the peak at *a* will be always to assume contours like those at *a* in Fig. 28, which are, of course, perfectly safe; but the tendency of the beds at *b* in Fig. 27 will be to break into contours such as at *b* here, which are all perilous, not only in the chance of each

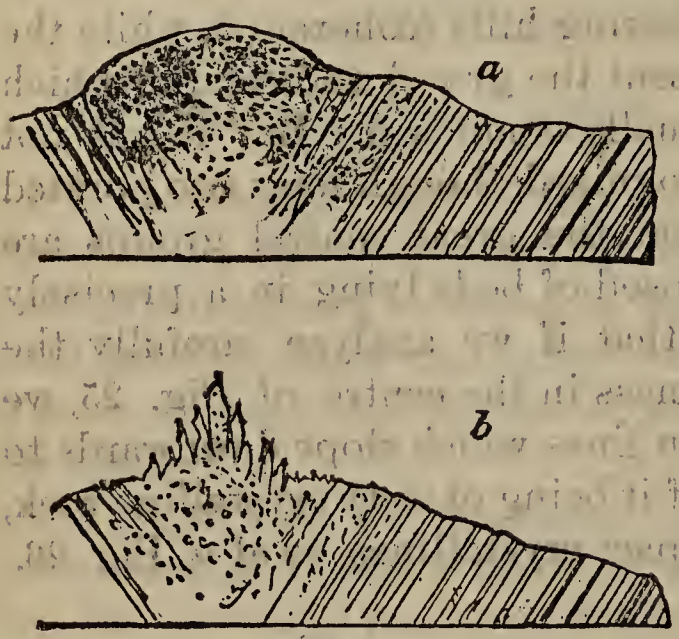


FIG. 27.

and as being the only range of the central mountains which had been much painted by Turner. But I believe the singular arrangements of beds which take place in this chain have been found by the German geologists to prevail also in the highest peaks of the Western Alps; and there are a peculiar beauty and providence in them which induce me to expect that farther inquiries may justify our attributing them to some very extensive law of the earth's structure. See the notes from De Saussure in Appendix 2.

several portion giving way, but in the manner in which they would *deliver*, from one to the other, the fragments which fell. A stone detached from any portion of the peak at *a* would be caught and stopped on the ledge beneath it; but a fragment loosened from *b* would not

FIG. 28.

stay till it reached the valley by a series of accelerating bounds.

§ 5. While, however, the secure and noble form represented at *a* in Figs. 26 and 28 is for the most part ordained to be that of the highest mountains, the contours at *b*, in each figure, are of perpetual occurrence among the secondary ranges, in which, on a smaller scale, they produce some of the most terrific and fantastic forms of precipice; not altogether without danger, as has been fearfully demonstrated by many a "bergfall" among the limestone groups of the Alps; but with far less danger than would have resulted from the permission of such forms among the higher hills; and with collateral advantages which we shall have presently to consider. In the meantime, we return to the examination of the superior groups.

§ 6. The reader is, no doubt, already aware that the chain of the Mont Blanc is bordered by two great valleys, running parallel to each other, and seemingly excavated on purpose that travellers might be able to pass, foot by foot, along each side of the Mont Blanc and its aiguilles, and thus examine every peak in succession. One of these valleys is that of Chamouni, the other that

of which one-half is called the Allée Blanche, and the other the Val Ferret, the town of Cormayeur being near its centre, where it opens to the Val d'Aosta. Now, cutting the chain of Mont Blanc right across, from valley to valley, through the double range of aiguilles, the section would be* as Fig. 29 here, in which *a* is the valley

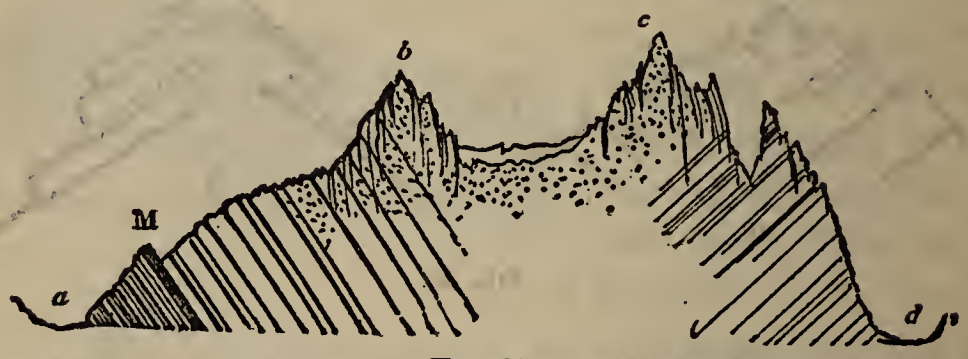


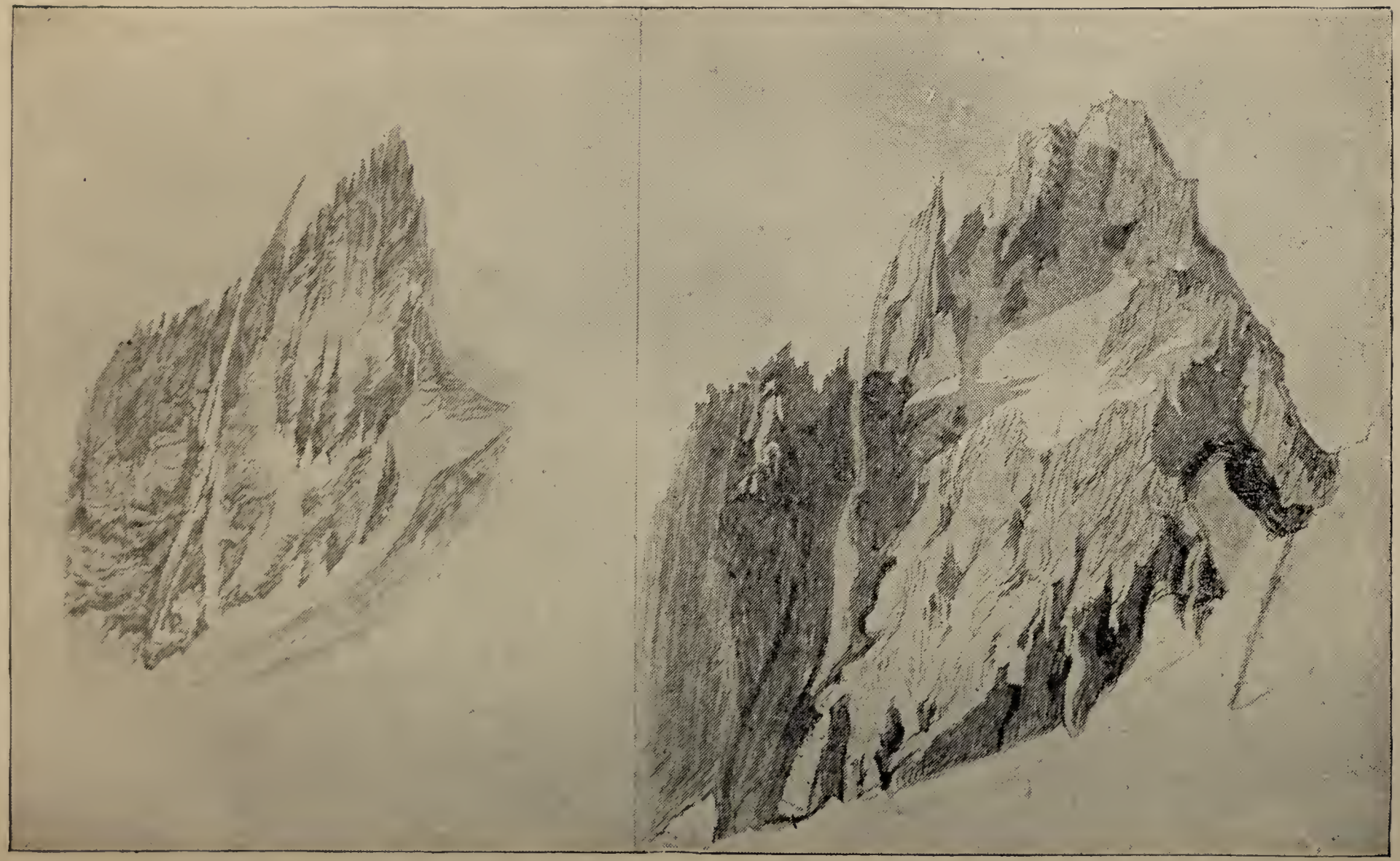
FIG. 29.

of Chamouni, *b* the range of aiguilles of Chamouni, *c* the range of the Géant, *d* the valley of Cormayeur.

The little projection under M is intended to mark approximately the position of the so well-known "Montanvert." It is a great weakness, not to say worse than weakness, on the part of travellers, to extol always chiefly what they think fewest people have seen or can see. I have climbed much, and wandered much, in the heart of the high Alps, but I have never yet seen anything which equalled the view from the cabin of the Montanvert; and as the spot is visited every year by increasing numbers of tourists, I have thought it best to take the mountains which surround it for the principal subjects of our inquiry.

§ 7. The little eminence left under M truly marks the height of the Montanvert on the flanks of the Aiguilles, but not accurately its position, which is somewhat behind the mass of mountain supposed to be cut through by

* That is to say, as it appears to me. There are some points of the following statements which are disputed among geologists, the reader will find them hereafter discussed at greater length.



Ideal. Actual.

PLATE XXX.—THE AIGUILLE CHARMOZ.

the section. But the top of the Montanvert is actually formed, as shown at M, by the crests of the oblique beds of slaty crystallines. Every traveller must remember the steep and smooth beds of rock like sloping walls, down which, and over the ledges of which, the path descends from the cabin to the edge of the glacier. These sloping walls are formed by the inner sides of the crystalline beds,* as exposed in the notch behind the letter M.

§ 8. To these beds we shall return presently, our object just now being to examine the aiguille, which, on the Montanvert, forms the most conspicuous mass of mountain on the right of the spectator. It is known in Chamouni as the Aiguille des Charmoz, and is distinguished by a very sharp horn or projection on its side, which usually attracts the traveller's attention as one of the most singular minor features in the view from the Montanvert. The larger masses of the whole aiguille, and true contour of this horn, are carefully given in Plate 30, Fig. 2, as they are seen in morning sunshine. The *impression* which travellers usually carry away with them is, I presume, to be gathered from Fig. 1, a facsimile of one of the lithographs purchased with avidity by English travellers, in the shops of Chamouni and Geneva, as giving a faithful representation of this aiguille seen from the Montanvert. It is worth while to perpetuate this example of the ideal landscape of the nineteenth century, popular at the time when the works of Turner were declared by the public to be extravagant and unnatural.

§ 9. This example of the common ideal of aiguilles is, however, useful in another respect. It shows the strong impression which these Chamouni mountains leave, of their being above all others sharp-peaked and splintery,

* Running, at that point very nearly, N. E. and S. W., and dipping under the ice at an angle of about seventy degrees.

dividing more or less into arrowy spires; and it marks the sense of another and very curious character in them, that these spires are apt to be somewhat bent or curved.

Both these impressions are partially true, and need to be insisted upon, and cleared of their indistinctness, or exaggeration.

First, then, this strong impression of their peakedness and spiry separateness is always produced with the least possible *danger* to the travelling and admiring public; for if in reality these granite mountains were ever separated into true spires or points, in the least resembling this popular ideal in Plate 30, the Montanvert and Mer de Glace would be as inaccessible, except at the risk of life, as the trenches of a besieged city; and the continual fall of the splintering fragments would turn even the valley of Chamouni itself into a stony desolation.

§ 10. Perhaps in describing mountains with any effort to give some idea of their sublime forms, no expression comes oftener to the lips than the word "peak." And yet it is curious how rarely, even among the grandest ranges, an instance can be found of a mountain ascertainably peaked in the true sense of the word,—pointed at the top, and sloping steeply on all sides; perhaps not more than five summits in the chain of the Alps, the Finster-Aarhorn, Wetterhorn, Bietsch-horn, Weisshorn, and Monte Viso presenting approximations to such a structure. Even in the case of not very steep pyramids, presenting themselves in the distance under some such outline as that at the top of Fig. 30, it almost invariably happens, when we approach and examine them, that they do not slope equally on all their sides, but are nothing more than steep ends of ridges, supported by far-extended masses of comparatively level rock, which, seen in perspective, give the impression of a steep slope, though in reality disposed in a horizontal, or nearly horizontal, line.

§ 11. Supposing the central diagram in Fig. 30 to be the apparent contour of a distant mountain, then its slopes may indeed, by singular chance, be as steep as they appear; but, in all probability, several of them are perspective descents of its retiring lines; and supposing it were formed as the gable roof of the old French house

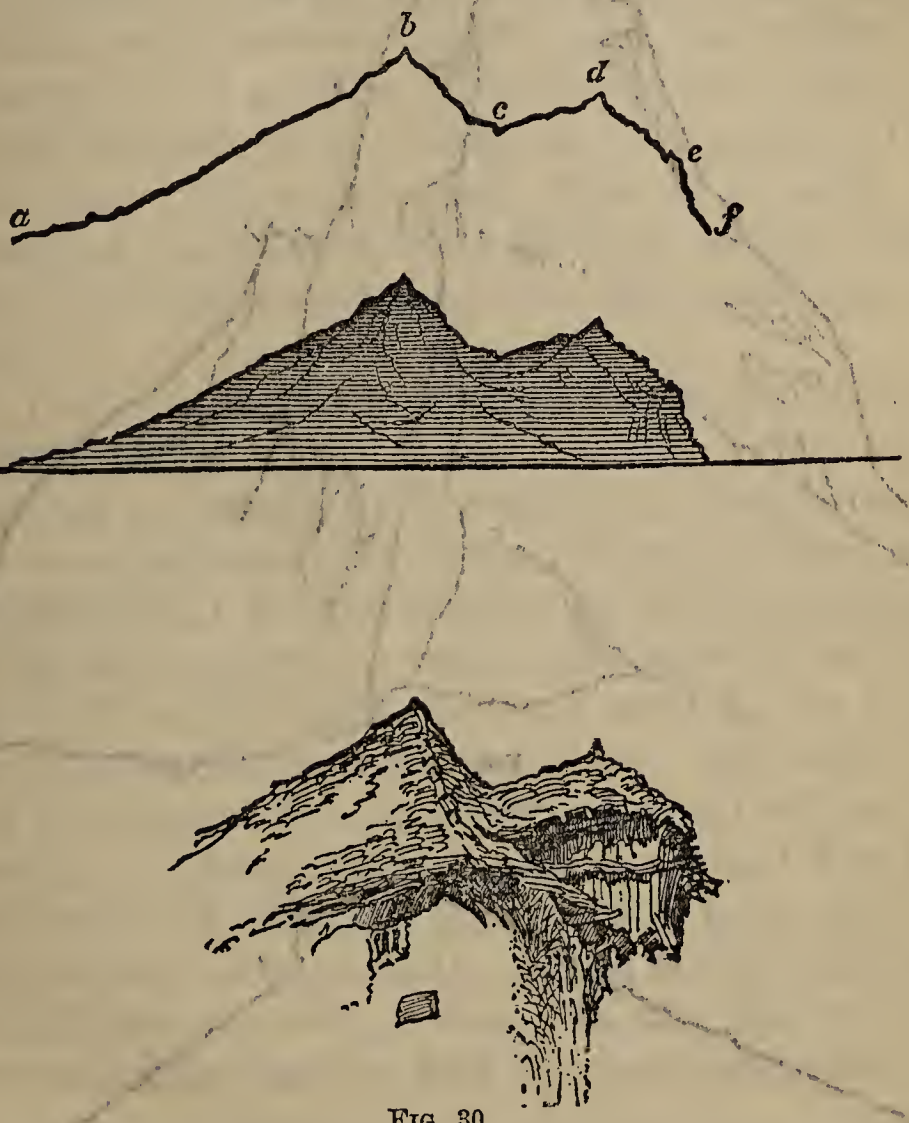


Fig. 30.

(Fig. 30), and seen under the same angle, it is evident that the part of the outline *a b* (in lettered reference line above) would be perfectly horizontal; *b c* an angle slope, in retiring perspective, much less steep than it appears; *c d*, perfectly horizontal; *d e*, an advancing or foreshortened angle slope, less steep than it appears; and *e f*, perfectly horizontal.

But if the pyramid presents itself under a more formidable aspect, and with steeper sides than those of the

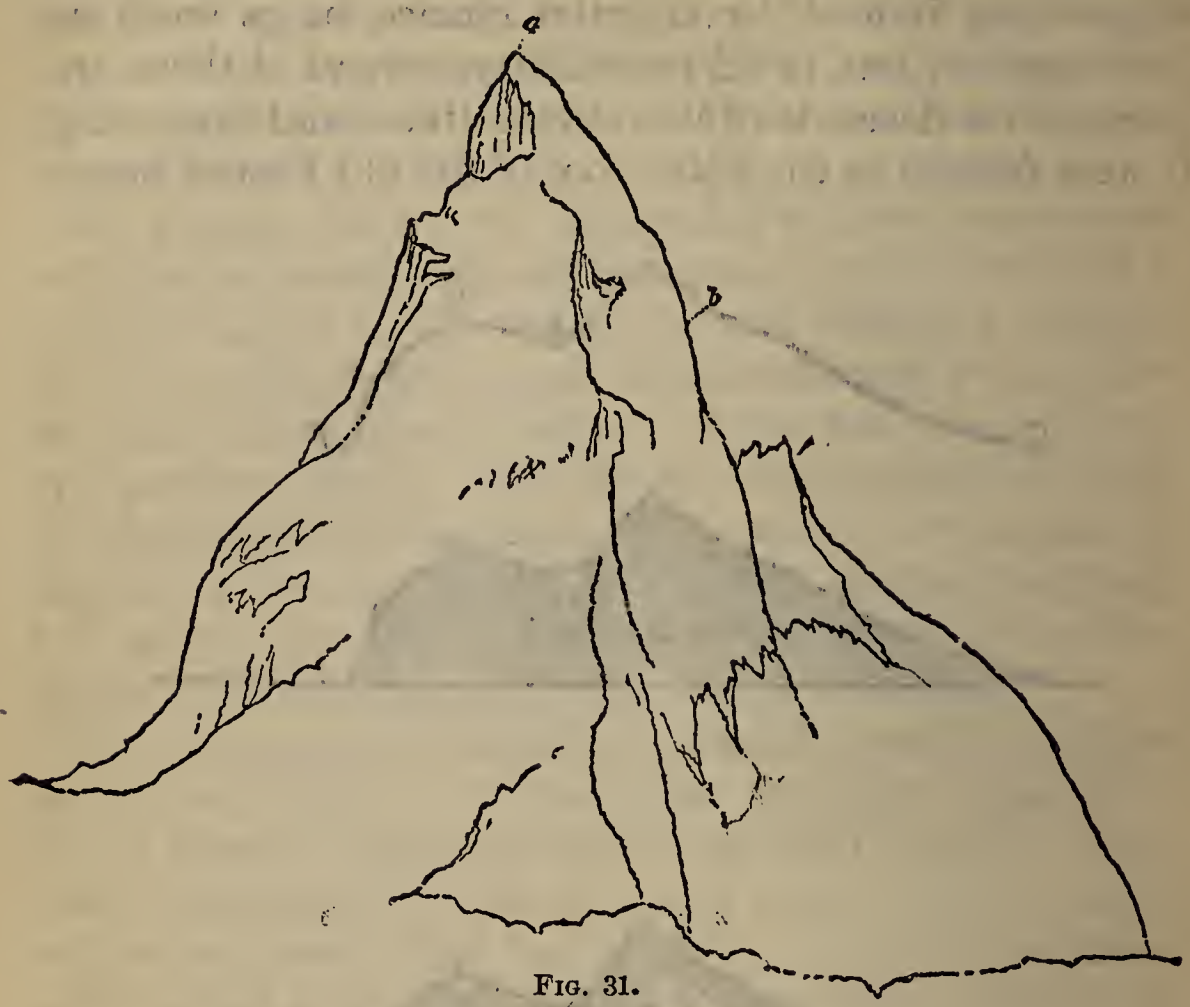


FIG. 31.

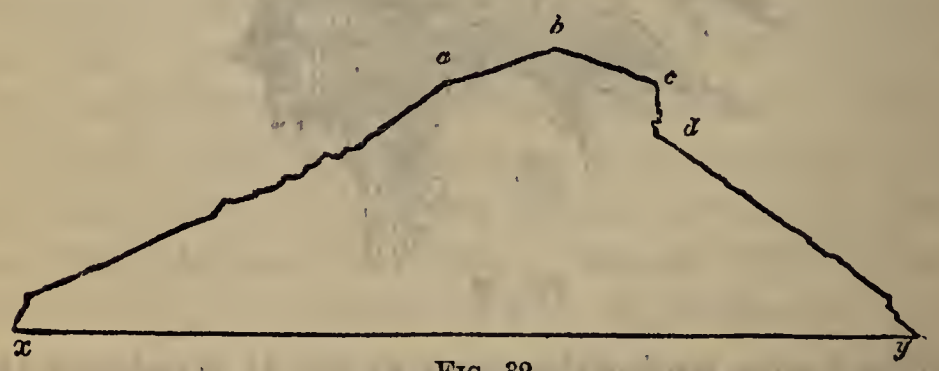


FIG. 32.

Angles with the horizon *x y*.

Of the line	*a b*	– 17°
"	*b c*	– 20½
"	*d y* (general slope, exclusive of inequalities)	– 35¾
"	*a x* (ditto, ditto, to point of cliff above *x*)	– 23½

central diagram, then it may be assumed (as far as I know mountains) for next to a certainty, that it is not a pointed

obelisk, but the end of a ridge more or less prolonged, of which we see the narrow edge or section turned towards us.

For instance, no mountain in the Alps produces a more vigorous impression of peakedness than the Matterhorn. In Professor Forbes's work on the Alps, it is spoken of as an "obelisk" of rock, and represented with little exaggeration in his seventh plate under the outline Fig. 31. Naturally, in glancing, whether at the plate or the mountain, we assume the mass to be a peak, and suppose the line *a b* to be the steep slope of its side. But that line is a perspective line. It is in reality *perfectly horizontal*, corresponding to *e f* in the penthouse roof, Fig. 30.

§ 12. I say "perfectly horizontal," meaning, of course, in general tendency. It is more or less irregular and broken, but so nearly horizontal that, after some prolonged examination of the data I have collected about the Matterhorn, I am at this moment in doubt *which is its top*. For as, in order to examine the beds on its flanks, I walked up to the Zmutt glacier, I saw that the line *a b* in Fig. 31 gradually lost its steepness; and about halfway up the glacier, the conjectural summit *a* then bearing nearly S. E. (forty degrees east of south), I found the contour was as in Fig. 32. In Fig. 33, I have given the contour as seen from Zermatt; and in all three, the same letters indicate the same points. In the Figures 32 and 33 I measured the angles with the greatest care,* from

* It was often of great importance to me to ascertain these *apparent* slopes with some degree of correctness. In order to do so without the trouble of carrying any instrument (except my compass and spirit-level), I had my Alpine pole made as even as a round rule for about a foot in the middle of its length. Taking the bearing of the mountain, placing the pole at right angles to the bearing, and adjusting it by the spirit-level, I brought the edge of a piece of finely cut pasteboard parallel, in a vertical plane (plumbed), with the apparent slope of the hill-side. A pencil line drawn by the pole then gave me a horizon,

the base lines *x y*, which are accurately horizontal; and their general truth, irrespective of mere ruggedness, may be depended upon. Now in this flank view, Fig. 32, what *was* the summit at Zermatt, *a*, becomes quite subordinate, and the point *b*, far down the flank in Forbes's view taken from the Riffelhorn, is here the apparent summit. I was for some time in considerable doubt which of the appear-

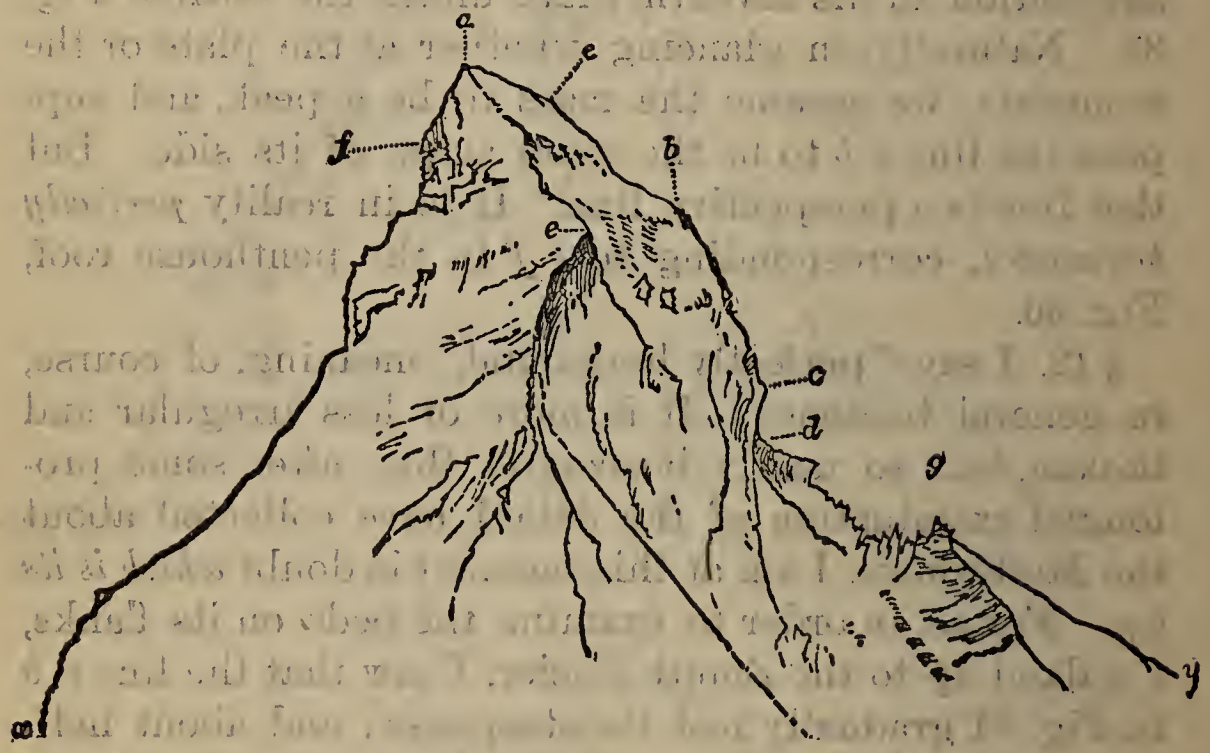


FIG. 33.

Angles with the horizon *x y*.

a f	56°	*c d* (overhanging)	79°
a e	12¾	*a x* (irrespective of irregularities)	56
e b (from point to point)	44½	*a y*	38¾
b c (ditto, ditto)	67¼		

ances was most trustworthy; and believe now that they are *both* deceptive; for I found, on ascending the flank of the hills on the other side of the Valais, to a height of about five thousand feet above Brieg, between the Aletsch glacier and Bietsch-horn; being thus high enough to get a view of the Matterhorn on something like distant terms of equality, up the St. Nicholas valley, it presented it-

with which the angle could be easily measured at home. The measurements thus obtained are given under the figures.

self under the outline Fig. 34, which seems to be conclusive for the supremacy of the point *e*, between *a* and *b* in Fig. 33. But the impossibility of determining, at the foot of it, without a trigonometrical observation, *which is the top* of such an apparent peak as the Matterhorn, may serve to show the reader how little the eye is to be trusted for the verification of a peaked outline.

FIG. 34.

§ 13. In like manner, the aiguilles of Chamouni, which present themselves to the traveller, as he looks up to them from the village, under an outline approximating to that rudely indicated at C in the next figure, are in reality buttresses projecting from an intermediate ridge. Let A be supposed to be a castle wall, with slightly elevated masses of square-built buttresses at intervals. Then, by a process of dilapidation, these buttresses might easily be brought to assume in their perspective of ruin the forms indicated at B, which, with certain modifications, is the actual shape of the Chamouni aiguilles. The top of the Aiguille Charmoz is not the point under *d*, but that under *e*. The deception is much increased by the elevation of the whole castle wall on the green bank before spoken of, which raises its foundation several thousand feet above the eye, and thus, giving amazing steepness to all the perspective lines, produces an impression of the utmost possible isolation of peaks, where, in reality, there is a well-supported and more or less continuous, though sharply jagged, pile of solid walls.

§ 14. There is, however, this great difference between the castle wall and aiguilles, that the dilapidation in the one would take place by the fall of *horizontal* bricks or stones; in the aiguilles it takes place in quite an opposite manner, by the flaking away of nearly *vertical* ones.

This is the next point of great interest respecting them. Observe, the object of their construction appears to be

the attainment of the utmost possible peakedness in aspect, with the least possible danger to the inhabitants of the valleys. As, therefore, they are first thrown into transverse ridges, which take, in perspective, a more or less peaked outline, so, in their dilapidation, they split into narrow flakes, which, if seen edgeways, look as sharp as a lance-point, but are nevertheless still strong; being

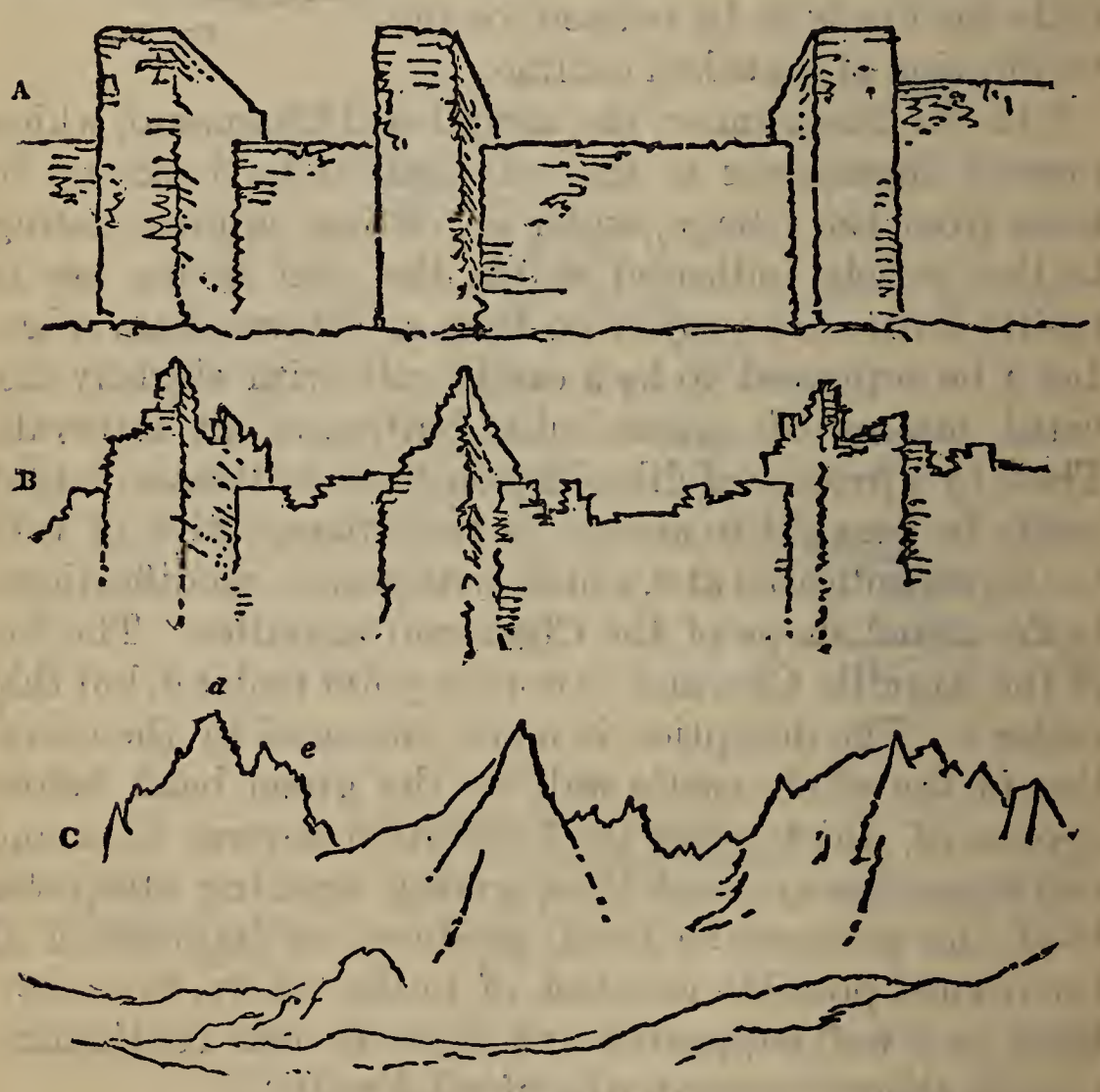


Fig. 35.

each of them, in reality, not a lance-point or needle, but a hatchet edge.

§ 15. And since if these sharp flakes broke *straight* across the masses of mountain, when once the fissure took place, all hold would be lost between flake and flake, it is ordered (and herein is the most notable thing in the

whole matter) that they shall not break straight, but *in curves, round the body* of the aiguilles, somewhat in the manner of the coats of an onion; so that, even after fissure has taken place, the detached film or flake clings to and leans upon the central mass, and will not fall from it till centuries of piercing frost have wedged it utterly from its hold; and, even then, will not fall all at once, but drop to pieces slowly, and flake by flake. Consider a little the beneficence of this ordinance;* supposing the cliffs had been built like the castle wall, the mouldering away of a few bricks, more or less, at the bottom would have brought down huge masses above, as it constantly does in ruins, and in the mouldering cliffs of the slaty coherents; while yet the top of the mountain would have been always blunt and rounded, as at *a*, Fig. 36, when seen against the sky. But the aiguille being built in these nearly vertical curved flakes, the worst that the frost can do to it is to push its undermost rocks asunder into forms such as at *b*, of which, when many of the edges have fallen, the lower ones are more or less supported by the very débris accumulated at their feet; and yet all the while the tops sustain

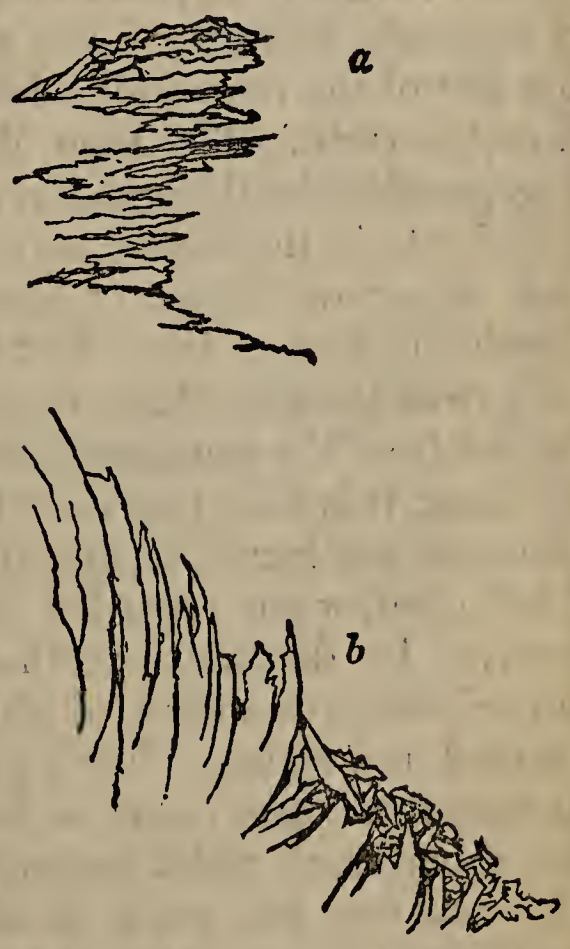


FIG. 36.

* That is to say, in a cliff intended to *owe its outline to dilapidation.* Where no dilapidation is to be permitted, the bedded structure, well knit, is always used. Of this we shall see various examples in the 16th chapter.

themselves in the most fantastic and incredible fineness of peak against the sky.

§ 16. I have drawn the flakes in Fig. 36, for illustration's sake, under a caricatured form. Their real aspect will be understood in a moment by a glance at the opposite plate, 31, which represents the central aiguille in the woodcut outline Fig. 35 (Aiguille Blaitière, called by Forbes Greppond), as seen from within about half a mile of its actual base. The white shell-like mass beneath it is a small glacier, which (in its beautifully curved outline) * appears to sympathize with the sweep of the rocks beneath, rising and breaking like a wave at the feet of the remarkable horn or spur which supports it on the right. The base of the aiguille itself is, as it were, washed by this glacier, or by the snow which covers it, till late in the season, as a cliff is by the sea; except that a narrow chasm, of some twenty or thirty feet in depth and two or three feet wide, usually separates the rock from the ice, which is melted away by the heat reflected from the southern face of the aiguille. The rock all along this base line is of the most magnificent compactness and hardness, and rings under the hammer like a bell; yet, when regarded from a little distance, it is seen to be distinctly inclined to separate into grand curved flakes or sheets, of which the dark edges are well marked in the plate. The pyramidal form of the aiguille, as seen from this point, is, however, entirely deceptive; the square rock which forms its apparent summit is not the real top, but much in advance of it, and the slope on the right against the sky is a perspective line; while, on the other hand, the precipice in light, above the three small horns at the narrowest part of the glacier, is considerably steeper than it appears to be, the cleavage of the flakes crossing it somewhat obliquely. But I show

* Given already as an example of curvature in the Stones of Venice, vol. i., plate 7.

PLATE XXXI.—THE AIGUILLE BLAITIERE.

the aiguille from this spot that the reader may more distinctly note the fellowship between its curved precipice and the little dark horn or spur which bounds the glacier; a spur the more remarkable because there is just such another, jutting in like manner from the corresponding angle of the next aiguille (Charmoz), both of them looking like remnants or foundations of the vaster ancient pyramids, of which the greater part has been by ages carried away.

§ 17. The more I examined the range of the aiguilles

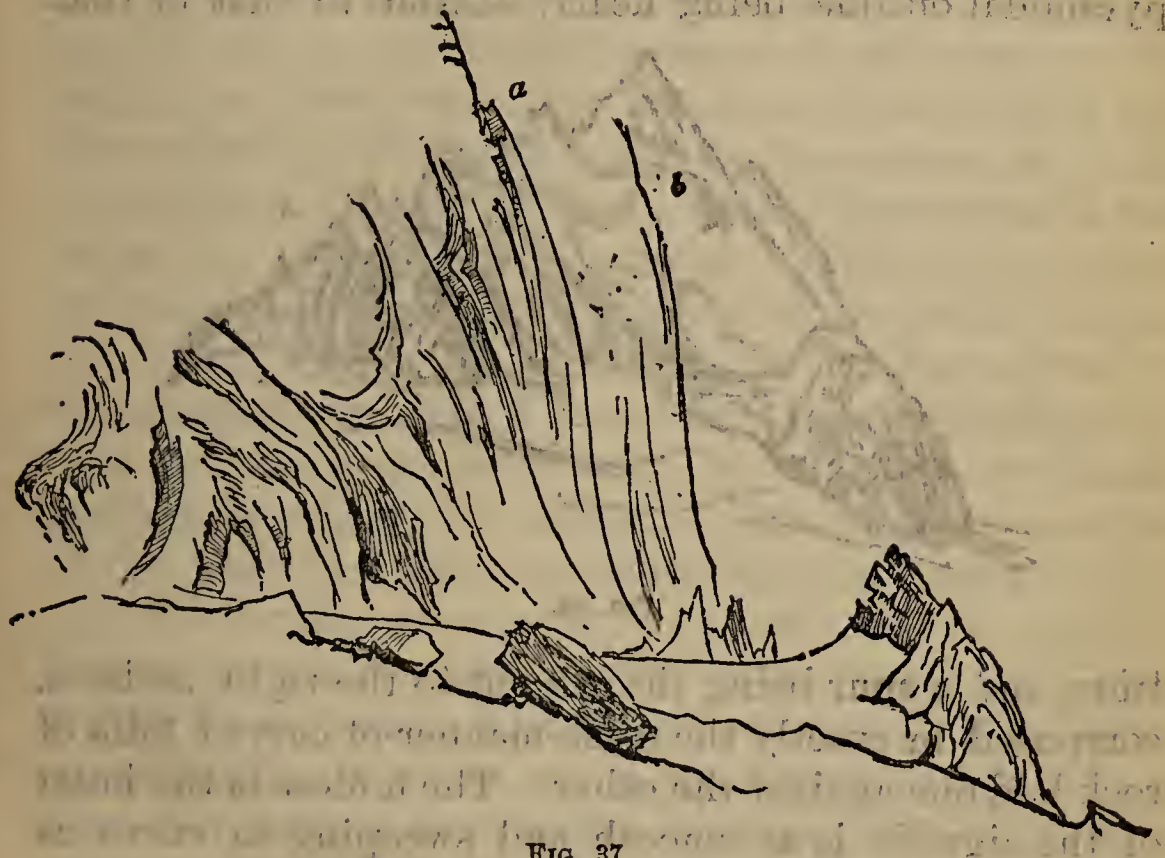


FIG. 37.

the more I was struck by this curved cleavage as their principal character. It is quite true that they have other straighter cleavages (noticed in the Appendix, as the investigation of them would be tiresome to the general reader); but it is this to which they owe the whole picturesqueness of their contours; curved as it is, not simply, but often into the most strange shell-like undulations, as will be understood by a glance at Fig. 37, which

shows the mere *governing* lines at the base of this Aiguille Blaitière, seen, with its spur, from a station some quarter of a mile nearer it, and more to the east than that chosen in Plate 31. These leading lines are rarely well shown in fine weather, the important contour from *a* downwards being hardly relieved clearly from the precipice beyond (*b*), unless a cloud intervenes, as it did when I made this memorandum; while, again, the leading lines of the Aiguille du Plan, as seen from the foot of it, close to the rocks, are as at Fig. 38, the generally pyramidal outline being nearly similar to that of Blai-

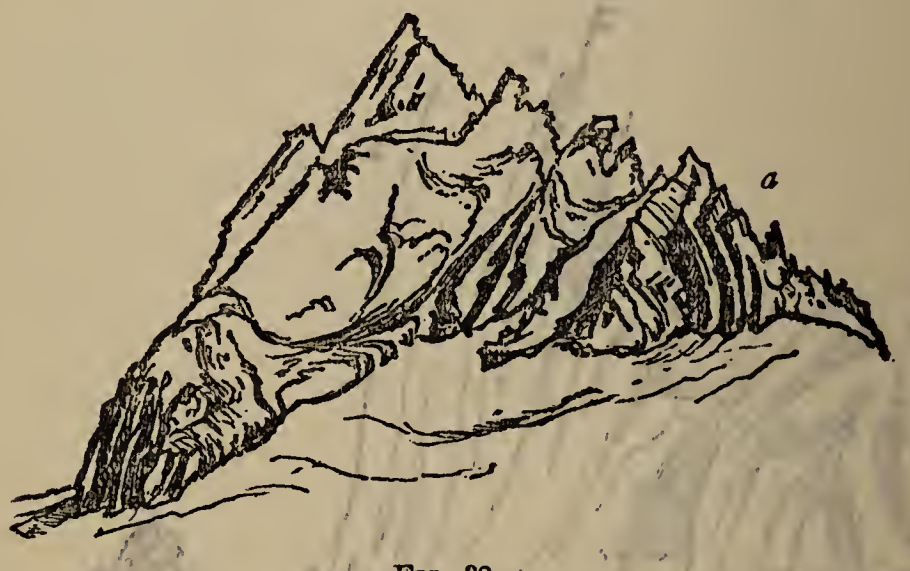


Fig. 38.

tière, and a spur being thrown out to the right, under *a*, composed in exactly the same manner of curved folia of rock laid one against the other. The hollow in the heart of the aiguille is as smooth and sweeping in curve as the cavity of a vast bivalve shell.

§ 18. I call these the governing or leading lines, not because they are the first which strike the eye, but because, like those of the grain of the wood in a tree-trunk, they rule the swell and fall and change of all the mass. In Nature, or in a photograph, a careless observer will by no means be struck by them, any more than he would by the curves of the tree; and an ordinary artist would draw rather the cragginess and granulation of the sur-

faces, just as he would rather draw the bark and moss of the trunk. Nor can any one be more steadfastly adverse than I to every substitution of anatomical knowledge for outward and apparent fact; but so it is, that as an artist increases in acuteness of perception, the facts which *become* outward and apparent to him are those which bear upon the growth or make of the thing. And, just as in looking at any woodcut of trees after Titian or Albert Durer, as compared with a modern water-color sketch, we shall always be struck by the writhing and rounding of the tree trunks in the one, and the stiffness, and merely blotted or granulated surfaces of the other; so, in looking at these rocks, the keenness of the artist's eye may almost precisely be tested by the degree in which he perceives the curves that give them their strength and grace, and in harmony with which the flakes of granite are bound together, like the bones of the jaw of a saurian. Thus the ten years of study which I have given to these mountains since I described them in the first volume as "traversed sometimes by graceful curvilinear fissures, sometimes by straight fissures," have enabled me to ascertain, and now generally at a glance to see, that the curvilinear ones are *dominant*, and that even the fissures or edges which appear perfectly straight have *almost* always some delicate sympathy with the curves. Occasionally, however, as in the separate beds which form the spur or horn of the Aiguille Blaitière, seen in true profile in Plate 29, Fig. 3, the straightness is so accurate that, not having brought a rule with me up the glacier, I was obliged to write under my sketch, "Not possible to draw it straight enough." Compare also the lines sloping to the left in Fig. 38.

§ 19. "But why not give everything just as it is; without caring what is dominant and what subordinate?"

You cannot. Of all the various impossibilities which torment and humiliate the painter, none are more vex-

atious than that of drawing a mountain form. It is indeed impossible enough to draw, by resolute care, the foam on a wave, or the outline of the foliage of a large tree; but in these cases, when care is at fault, carelessness will help, and the dash of the brush will in some measure give wildness to the churning of the foam, and infinitude to the shaking of the leaves. But chance will not help us with the mountain. Its fine and faintly organized edge seems to be definitely traced against the sky; yet let us set ourselves honestly to follow it, and we find, on the instant, it has disappeared: and that for two reasons. The first, that if the mountain be lofty, and in light, it is so faint in color that the eye literally cannot trace its separation from the hues next to it. The other day I wanted the contour of a limestone mountain in the Valais, distant about seven miles, and as many thousand feet above me: it was barren limestone; the morning sun fell upon it, so as to make it almost vermilion color, and the sky behind it a bluish green. Two tints could hardly have been more opposed, but both were so subtle, that I found it impossible to see accurately the line that separated the vermilion from the green. The second, that if the contour be observed from a nearer point, or looked at when it is dark against the sky, it will be found composed of millions of minor angles, crags, points, and fissures, which no human sight or hand can draw finely enough, and yet all of which have effect upon the mind.

§ 20. The outline shown as dark against the sky in Plate 29, Fig. 2, is about a hundred, or a hundred and twenty, yards of the top of the ridge of Charmoz, running from the base of the aiguille down to the Montanvert, and seen from the moraine of the Charmoz glacier, a quarter of a mile distant to the south-west.* It is

* The top of the aiguille of the Little Charmoz bearing, from the point whence this sketch was made, about six degrees east of north.

formed of decomposing granite, thrown down in blocks entirely detached, but wedged together, so as to stand continually in these seemingly perilous contours (being a portion of such a base of aiguille as that in *b*, Fig. 36, p. 235).* The block forming the summit on the left is fifteen or eighteen feet long; and the upper edge of it, which is the dominant point of the Charmoz ridge, is the best spot in the Chamouni district for giving a thorough command of the relations of the aiguilles on each side of the Mer de Glace. Now put the book, with that page open, upright, at three yards distance from you, and try to draw this contour, which I have made as dark and distinct as it ever could be in reality, and you will immediately understand why it is impossible to draw mountain outlines rightly.

§ 21. And if not outlines, *a fortiori* not details of mass, which have all the complexity of the outline multiplied a thousand fold, and drawn in fainter colors. Nothing is more curious than the state of embarrassment into which the unfortunate artist must soon be cast when he endeavors honestly to draw the face of the simplest mountain cliff—say a thousand feet high, and two or

* The *summits* of the aiguilles are often more fantastically rent still. Fig. 39 is the profile of a portion of the upper edge of the Aiguille du Moine, seen from the crest of Charmoz; Fig. 40 shows the three lateral fragments, drawn to a larger scale. The height of

Fig. 39.

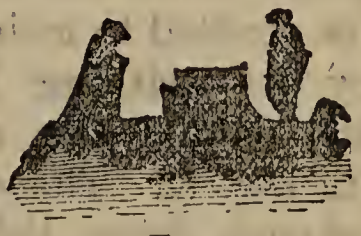


Fig. 40.

each of the upright masses must be from twenty to twenty-five feet. I do not know if their rude resemblance to two figures, on opposite sides of a table or altar, has had anything to do with the name of the the aiguille.

three miles distant. It is full of exquisite details, all seemingly decisive and clear; but when he tries to arrest one of them, he cannot see it,—cannot find where it begins or ends,—and presently it runs into another; and then he tries to draw that, but that will not be drawn, neither, until it has conducted him to a third, which, somehow or another, made part of the first; presently he finds that, instead of three, there are in reality four, and then he loses his place altogether. He tries to draw clear lines, to make his work look craggy, but finds that then it is too hard; he tries to draw soft lines, and it is immediately too soft; he draws a curved line, and instantly sees it should have been straight; a straight one, and finds, when he looks up again, that it has got curved while he was drawing it. There is nothing for him but despair, or some sort of abstraction and shorthand for cliff. Then the only question is, what is the wisest abstraction; and out of the multitude of lines that cannot altogether be interpreted, which are the really dominant ones; so that if we cannot give the whole, we may at least give what will convey the most important facts about the cliff.

§ 22. Recurring then to our "public opinion" of the Aiguille Charmoz, we find the greatest exaggeration of, and therefore I suppose the greatest interest in, the narrow and spiry point on its left side. That is in reality not a point at all, but a hatchet edge; a flake of rock, which is enabled to maintain itself in this sharp-edged state by its writhing folds of sinewy granite. Its structure, on a larger scale, and seen "edge on," is shown in Fig. 41. The whole aiguille is composed of a series of such flakes, liable, indeed, to all kinds of fissure in other directions, but holding, by their modes of vertical association, the strongest authority over the form of the whole mountain. It is not in all lights that they are seen plainly: for instance, in the morning

1. Ideal.

2. Turnerian.

PLATE XXXII.—AIGUILLE DRAWING.

effect in Plate 30 they are hardly traceable: but the longer we watch, the more they are perceived; and their power of sustaining themselves vertically is so great, that at the foot of the aiguille on the right a few of them form a detached mass, known as the *petit* Charmoz, between E and *c* in Fig. 60, p. 264, of which the height of the uttermost flake, between *c* and *d*, is about five hundred feet.

Important, however, as this curved cleavage is, it is so confused among others, that it has taken me, as I said, ten years of almost successive labor to develop, in any degree of completeness, its relations among the Aiguilles of Chamouni; and even of professed geologists, the only person who has described it properly is De Saussure, whose *continual* sojourn among the Alps enabled him justly to discern the constant from the inconstant phenomena. And yet, in his very first journey to Savoy, Turner saw it at a glance, and fastened on it as the main thing to be expressed in those mountains.

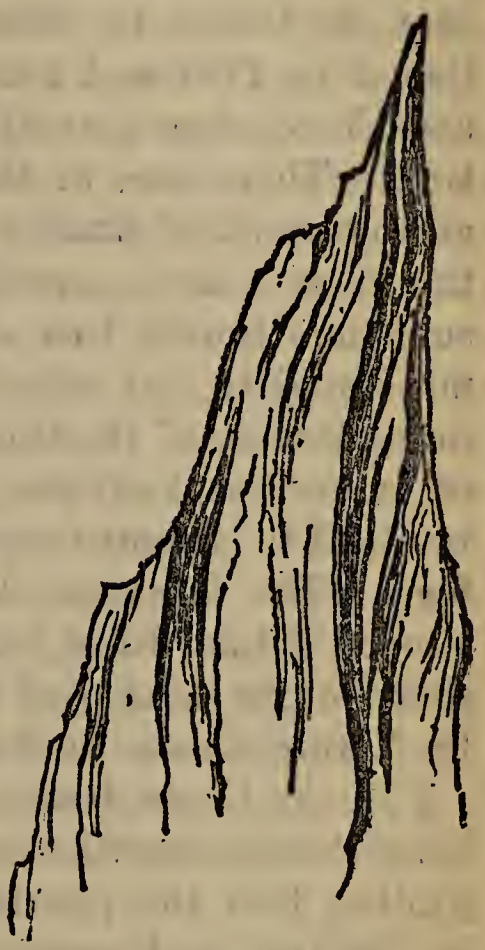


FIG. 41.

In the opposite Plate (32), the darkest division, on the right, is a tolerably accurate copy of Turner's rendering of the Aiguille Charmoz (etched and engraved by himself), in the plate called the "Mer de Glace," in the Liber Studiorum. Its outline is in local respects inaccurate enough, being modified by Turnerian topography; but the flaky character is so definite, that it looks as if it had been prepared for

an illustrative diagram of the points at present under discussion.

§ 23. And do not let it be supposed that this was by chance, or that the modes of mountain drawing at the period would in any wise have helped Turner to discover these lines. The aiguilles had been drawn before this time, and the figure on the left in Plate 32 will show how. It is a fac-simile of a piece of an engraving of the Mer de Glace, by Woollett, after William Pars, published in 1783, and founded on the general Wilsonian and Claudesque principles of landscape common at the time. There are, in the rest of the plate, some good arrangements of shadow and true aerial perspective; and the piece I have copied, which is an attempt to represent the Aiguille Dru, opposite the Charmoz, will serve, not unfairly, to show how totally inadequate the draughtsmen of the time were to perceive the character of mountains, and, also, how unable the human mind is by itself to conceive anything like the variety of natural form. The workman had not looked at the thing,—trusted to his "Ideal," supposed that broken and rugged rocks might be shaped better out of his own head than by Nature's laws,—and we see what comes of it.

§ 24. And now, lastly, observe, in the laws by which this strange curvilinear structure is given to the aiguilles, how the provision for beauty of form is made in the first landscape materials we have to study. We have permitted ourselves, according to that unsystematic mode of proceeding pleaded for in the opening of our present task, to wander hither and thither as this or that question rose before us, and demanded, or tempted, our pursuit. But the reader must yet remember that our special business in this section of the work is the observance of the nature of *beauty*, and of the degrees in which the aspect of any object fulfils the laws of beauty stated in the second volume. Now, in the fif-

teenth paragraph of the chapter on infinity, it was stated that curvature was essential to all beauty, and that what we should "need more especially to prove, was the constancy of curvature in all natural forms whatsoever." And these aiguilles, which are the first objects we have had definitely to consider, appeared as little likely to fill the condition as anything we could have come upon. I am well assured that the majority of spectators see no curves in them at all, but an intensely upright, stern, spiry ruggedness and angularity. And we might even beforehand have been led to expect, and to be contented in expecting, nothing else from them than this; for since, as we have said often, they are part of the earth's skeleton, being created to sustain and strengthen everything else, and yet differ from a skeleton in this, that the earth is not only supported by their strength, but fed by their ruin; so that they are first composed of the hardest and least tractable substance, and then exposed to such storm and violence as shall beat large parts of them to powder;—under these desperate conditions of being, I say, we might have anticipated some correspondent ruggedness and terribleness of aspect, some such refusal to comply with ordinary laws of beauty, as we often see in other things and creatures put to hard work, and sustaining distress or violence.

§ 25. And truly, at first sight, there is such refusal in their look, and their shattered walls and crests seem to rise in a gloomy contrast with the soft waves of bank and wood beneath: nor do I mean to press the mere fact that, as we look longer at them, other lines become perceptible, because it might be thought no proof of their beauty that they needed long attention in order to be discerned. But I think this much at least is deserving of our notice, as confirmatory of foregone conclusions, that the forms which in other things are pro-

duced by slow increase, or gradual abrasion of surface, *are here produced by rough fracture*, when rough fracture is to be the law of existence. A rose is rounded by its own soft ways of growth, a reed is bowed into tender curvature by the pressure of the breeze; but we could not, from these, have proved any resolved preference, by Nature, of curved lines to others, inasmuch as it might always have been answered that the curves were produced, not for beauty's sake, but infallibly, by the laws of vegetable existence; and, looking at broken flints or rugged banks afterwards, we might have thought that we only liked the curved lines because associated with life and organism, and disliked the angular ones because associated with inaction and disorder. But Nature gives us in these mountains a more clear demonstration of her will. She is here driven to make fracture the law of being. She cannot tuft the rock-edges with moss, or round them by water, or hide them with leaves and roots. She is bound to produce a form, admirable to human beings, by continual breaking away of substance. And behold—so soon as she is compelled to do this—she changes the law of fracture itself. "Growth," she seems to say, "is not essential to my work, nor concealment, nor softness; but curvature is: and if I must produce my forms by breaking them, the fracture itself shall be in curves. If, instead of dew and sunshine, the only instruments I am to use are the lightning and the frost, then their forked tongues and crystal wedges shall still work out my laws of tender line. Devastation instead of nurture may be the task of all my elements, and age after age may only prolong the unrenovated ruin; but the appointments of typical beauty which have been made over all creatures shall not therefore be abandoned; and the rocks shall be ruled, in their perpetual perishing, by the same ordinances that direct the bending of the reed and the blush of the rose."

CHAPTER XV.

RESULTING FORMS:—SECONDLY, CRESTS.

§ 1. BETWEEN the aiguilles, or other conditions of central peak, and the hills which clearly formed, as explained in Chap. XII. § 11, by the mere breaking of the edges of solid beds of coherent rock, there occurs almost always a condition of mountain summit, intermediate in aspect, as in position. The aiguille may generally be represented by the type *a*, Fig. 42; the solid and

FIG. 42.

simple beds of rock by the type *c*. The condition *b*, clearly intermediate between the two, is, on the whole, the most graceful and perfect in which mountain masses occur. It seems to have attracted more of the attention of the poets than either of the others; and the ordinary word, crest, which we carelessly use in speaking of mountain summits, as if it meant little more than "edge" or "ridge," has a peculiar force and propriety when applied to ranges of cliff whose contours correspond thus closely to the principal lines of the crest of a Greek helmet.

§ 2. There is another resemblance which they can hardly fail to suggest when at all irregular in form,—

that of a wave about to break. Byron uses the image definitely of Soracte; and, in a less clear way, it seems to present itself occasionally to all minds, there being a general tendency to give or accept accounts of mountain form under the image of waves; and to speak of a hilly country, seen from above, as looking like a "sea of mountains."

Such expressions, vaguely used, do not, I think, generally imply much more than that the ground is waved or undulated into bold masses. But if we give prolonged attention to the mountains of the group *b* we shall gradually begin to feel that more profound truth is couched under this mode of speaking, and that there is indeed an appearance of action and united movement in these crested masses, nearly resembling that of sea waves; that they seem not to be heaped up, but to leap or toss themselves up; and in doing so, to wreathe and twist their summits into the most fantastic, yet harmonious, curves, governed by some grand under-sweep like that of a tide, running through the whole body of the mountain chain.

For instance, in Fig. 43, which gives, rudely, the leading lines of the junction of the "Aiguille pourrie"* (Chamouni) with the Aiguilles Rouges, the reader cannot, I think, but feel that there is something which binds the mountains together—some common influence at their heart which they cannot resist: and that, however they may be broken or disordered, there is as true unity among them as in the sweep of a wild wave, governed, through all its foaming ridges, by constant laws of weight and motion.

§ 3. How far this apparent unity is the result of elevatory force *in* mountain, and how far of the sculptural force of water *upon* the mountain, is the ques-

* So called from the mouldering nature of its rocks. They are slaty crystallines, but unusually fragile.

tion we have mainly to deal with in the present chapter.

But first look back to Fig. 7, of Plate 8, Vol. III., there given as the typical representation of the ruling forces of growth in a leaf. Take away the extreme por-

FIG. 43.

tion of the curve on the left, and any segment of the leaf remaining, terminated by one of its ribs, as *a* or *b*, Fig. 44, will be equally a typical contour of a common crested mountain. If the reader will merely turn Plate 8 so as to look at the figure upright, with its stalk downwards, he will see that it is also the base of the honey-

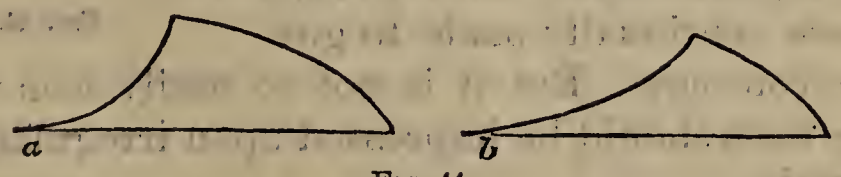


FIG. 44.

suckle ornament of the Greeks. I may anticipate what we shall have to note with respect to vegetation so far as to tell him that it is also the base of form in all timber trees.

§ 4. There seems something, therefore, in this contour which makes its production one of the principal aims of Nature in all her compositions. The cause of this appears to be, that as the cinq-foil is the simplest expression of proportion, this is the simplest expression of opposition, in unequal curved lines. If we take any lines, *a x* and *e g*, Fig. 45, both of varied curvature (not segments of circles), and one shorter than the other, and join them together so as to form one line, as *b x*, *x g*, we shall have one of the common lines of beauty; if we join them at an angle, as *c x*, *x y*, we shall have the common crest, which is in fact merely a jointed line of beauty. If we join them as at *a*, Fig. 46, they form a line at once monotonous and cramped, and the jointed condition of this same line, *b*, is hardly less so. It is easily proved, therefore, that the junction of lines *c x*, *x y*, is the simplest and most graceful mode of opposition; and easily observed that in the branches of trees, wings of birds, and other more or less regular organizations, such groups of line are continually made to govern the contours. But it is not so easily seen why or how this form should be impressed upon irregular heaps of mountain.

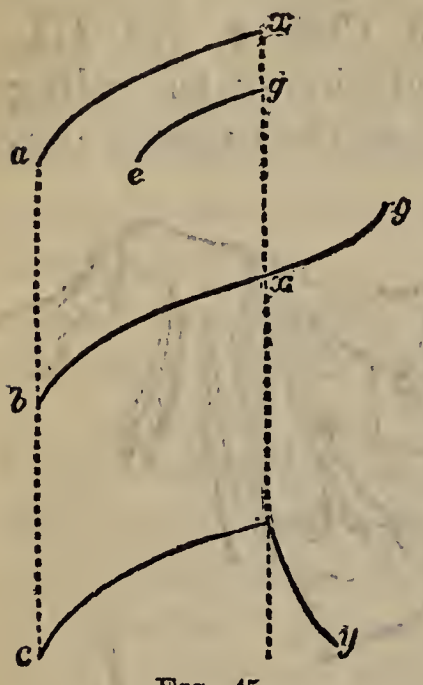


Fig. 45.

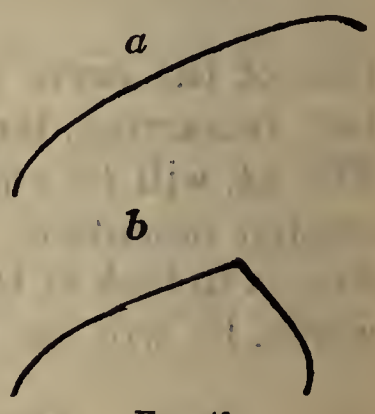


Fig. 46.

§ 5. If a bed of coherent rock be raised in the manner described in Chap. XIII., so as to form a broken precipice with its edge, and a long slope with its surface, as at *a*, Fig. 47 (and in this way nearly all hills are raised), the top of the precipice has usually a tendency to crum-

ble down, and, in process of time, to form a heap of advanced ruins at its foot. On the other side, the back or slope of the hill does not crumble down, but is gradually worn away by the streams; and as these are always more considerable, both in velocity and weight, at the bottom of the slope than the top, the ground is faster worn away at the bottom, and the straight slope is cut to a curve of continually increasing steepness. Fig. 47 *b* represents the contour to which the hill *a* would thus be brought in process of time; the dotted line indicating its original form. The result, it will be seen, is a crest.*

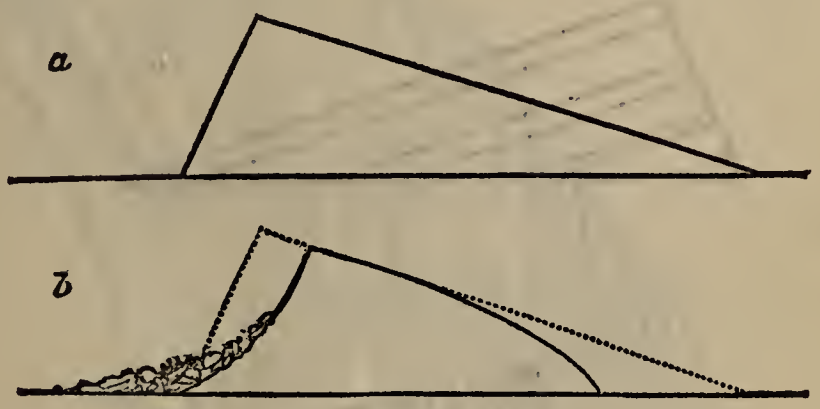


FIG. 47.

§ 6. But crests of this uniform substance and continuous outline occur only among hills composed of the softest coherent rocks, and seldom attain any elevation such as to make them important or impressive. The notable crests are composed of the hard coherents or slaty crystallines, and then the contour of the crests depends mainly on the question whether, in the original mass of it, the beds lie as at *a* or as at *b*, Fig. 48. If they lie as at *a*, then the resultant crest will have the general appearance seen at *c*; the edges of the beds getting separated and serrated by the weather. If the beds lie as

* The materials removed from the slope are spread over the plain or valley below. A nearly equal quantity is supposed to be removed from the other side; but besides this *removed* mass, the materials crumble heavily from above, and form the concave curve.

at *b*, the resultant crest will be of such a contour as that at *d*.

The crests of the contour *d* are formed usually by the harder coherent rocks, and are notable chiefly for their

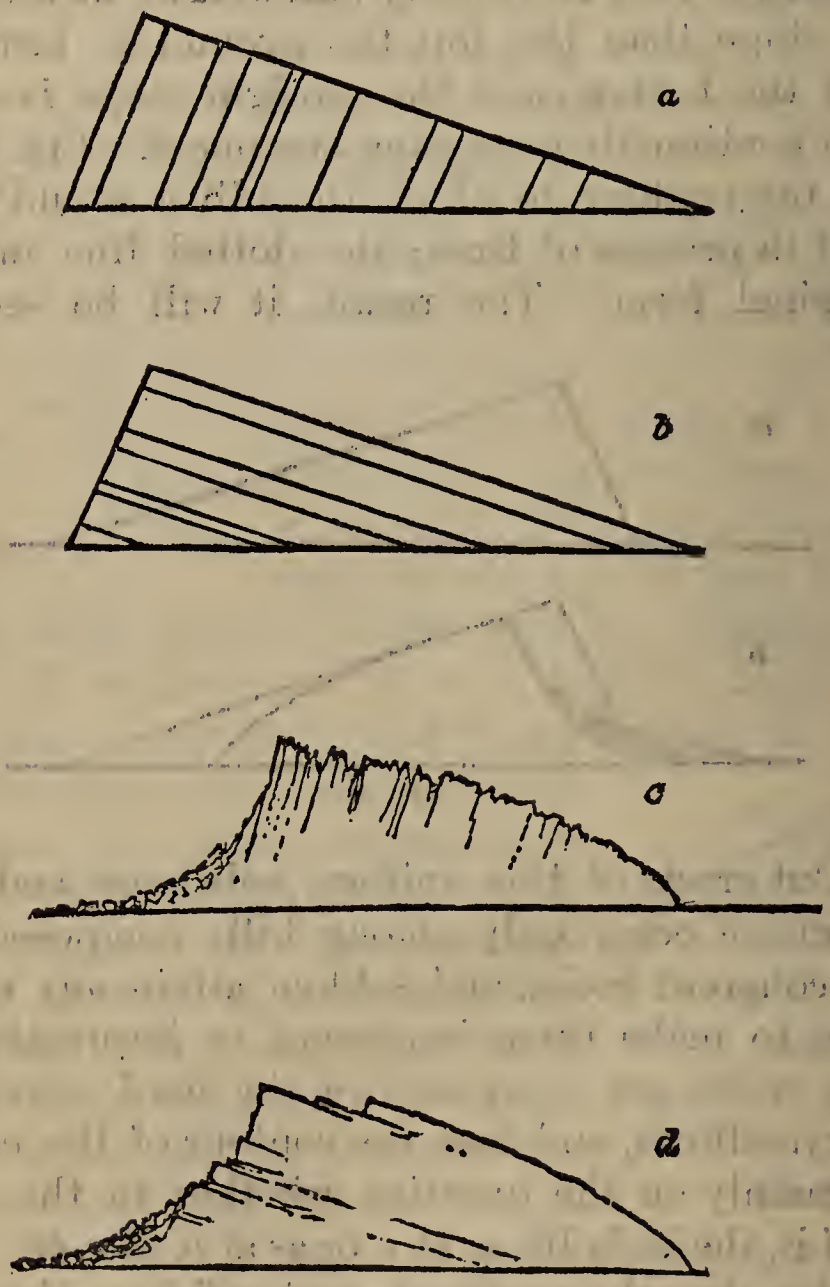


Fig. 48.

bold precipices in front, and regular slopes, or sweeping curves, at the back. We shall examine them under the special head of *precipices*. But the crests of the form at *c* belong usually to the slaty crystallines, and are those properly called crests, their edges looking, especially

when covered with pines, like separated plumes. These it is our chief business to examine in the present chapter.

§ 7. In order to obtain this kind of crest, we first require to have our mountain beds thrown up in the form *a*, Fig. 48. This is not easily done on a large scale, except among the slaty crystallines forming the flanks of the great chains, as in Fig. 29, p. 226. In that figure it will be seen that the beds forming each side of the chain of Mont Blanc are thrown into the required steepness, and therefore, whenever they are broken towards the central mountain, they naturally form the front of a crest,

FIG. 49.

while the torrents and glaciers falling over their longer slopes curve them into rounded banks towards the valley.

§ 8. But the beauty of a crest or bird's wing consists, in nature, not merely in its curved terminal outline, but in the radiation of the plumes, so that while each assumes a different curve, every curve shall show a certain harmony of direction with all the others.

We shall have to enter into the examination of this subject at greater length in the 17th chapter; meanwhile, it is sufficient to observe the law in a single example, such as Fig. 49, which is a wing of one of the angels in Dürer's woodcut of the Fall of Lucifer.* At first sight, the plumes seem disposed with much irregularity, but there is a sense of power and motion in the whole which the reader would find was at once lost by a careless copyist; for it depends on the fact that if we take the principal curves at any points of the wing, and continue them in the lines which they are pursuing at the moment they terminate, these continued lines will all meet in a single point, c. It is this law which gives unity to the wing.

All groups of curves set beside each other depend for their beauty upon the observance of this law;† and if,

* The lines are a little too straight in their continuations, the engraver having cut some of the curvature out of their thickness, thinking I had drawn them too coarsely. But I have chosen this coarsely lined example, and others like it, following, because I wish to accustom the reader to distinguish between the mere fineness of instrument in the artist's hand, and the precision of the line he draws. Give Titian a blunt pen, and still Titian's line will be a noble one: a tyro, with a pen well mended, may draw more neatly; but his lines ought to be discerned from Titian's, if we understand drawing. Every line in this woodcut of Dürer's is *refined;* and that in the noblest sense. Whether broad or fine does not matter, the lines are *right;* and the most delicate false line is evermore to be despised, in presence of the coarsest faithful one.

† Not absolutely on the meeting of the curves in one point, but on their radiating with some harmonious succession of difference in direction. The difference between lines which are in true harmony of

therefore, the mountain crests are to be perfectly beautiful, Nature must contrive to get this element of radiant curvature into them in one way or another. Nor does it, at first sight, appear easy for her to get, I do not say radiant curves, but curves *at all:* for in the aiguilles, she actually bent their beds; but in these slaty crystallines it seems not always convenient to her to bend the beds; and when they are to remain straight, she must obtain the curvature in some other way.

§ 9. One way in which she gets it is curiously simple in itself, but somewhat difficult to explain, unless the reader will be at the pains of making a little model for

Fig. 50.

Fig. 51.

himself out of paste or clay. Hitherto, observe, we have spoken of these crests as seen at their sides, as a Greek helmet is seen from the side of the wearer. By means presently to be examined, these mountain crests are so shaped that, seen *in front*, or from behind (as a helmet crest is seen in front of or behind the wearer), they present the contour of a sharp ridge, or house gable. Now, if the breadth of this ridge at its base remains the same, while its height gradually diminishes from the front of it to the back (as from the top of the crest to the back of the helmet), it necessarily assumes the form of such a

radiation, and lines which are not, can, in complicated masses, only be detected by a trained eye; yet it is often the chief difference between good and bad drawing. A cluster of six or seven black plumes forming the wing of one of the cherubs in Titian's Assumption, at Venice, has a freedom and force about it in the painting which no copyist or engraver has ever yet rendered, though it depends merely on the subtlety of the curves, not on the color.

quaint gable roof as that shown in profile in Fig. 50, and in perspective * in Fig. 51, in which the gable is steep at the end farthest off, but depressed at the end nearest us; and the rows of tiles, in consequence, though in reality quite straight, appear to radiate as they retire, owing to their different slopes. When a mountain crest is thus formed, and the concave curve of its front is carried into its flanks, each edge of bed assuming this concave curve, and radiating, like the rows of tiles, in perspective at the same time, the whole crest is thrown into the form Fig. 52, which is that of the radiating plume required.

FIG. 52.

§ 10. It often happens, however, that Nature does not choose to keep the ridge broad at the lower extremity, so as to diminish its steepness. But when this is not so, and the base is narrowed so that the slope of side shall be nearly equal everywhere, she almost always obtains her varied curvature of the plume in another way, by merely turning the crest a little round as it descends. I will not confuse the reader by examining the complicated results of such turning on the inclined lines of the strata; but he can understand, in a moment, its effect on another series of lines, those caused by rivulets of water down the sides of the crest. These lines are, of course, always, in general tendency, perpendicular. Let *a*, Fig. 53, be a circular funnel, painted inside with a pattern of vertical lines meeting at the bottom. Suppose these lines to represent the ravines traced by the water. Cut off a portion of the lip of the funnel, as at *b*, to represent the crest side. Cut the edge so as to slope down toward you, and add a slope on the other side. Then

* "*Out of* perspective," I should have said: but it will show what I mean.

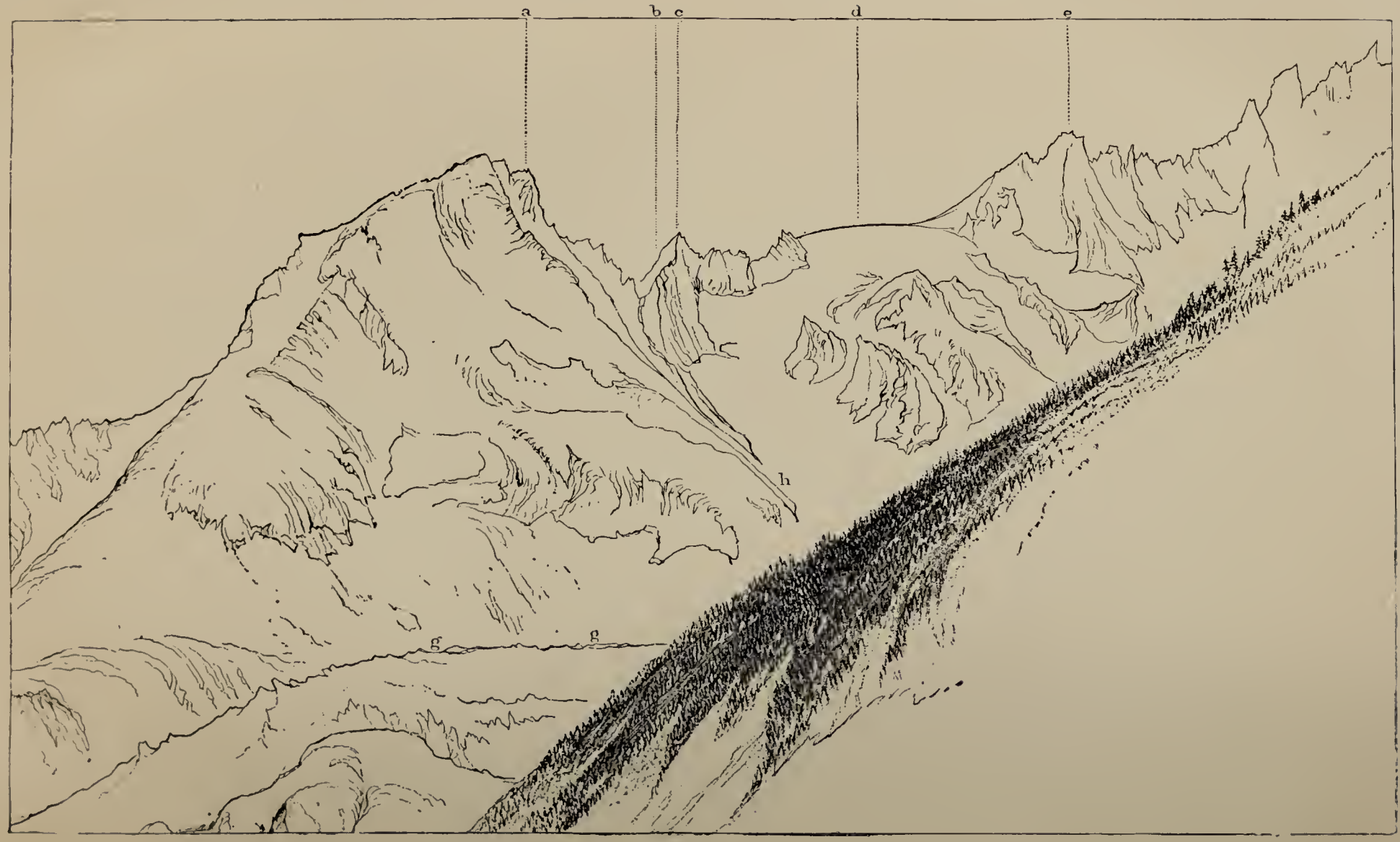


PLATE XXXIII.—LEADING CONTOURS OF AIGUILLE BOUCHARD.

give each inner line the concave sweep, and you have your edge *c*, of the required form, with radiant curvature.

§ 11. A greater space of such a crest is always seen on its concave than on its convex side (the outside of the funnel); of this other perspective I shall have to speak hereafter; meantime, we had better continue the examination of the proper crest, the *c* of Fig. 48, in some special instance.

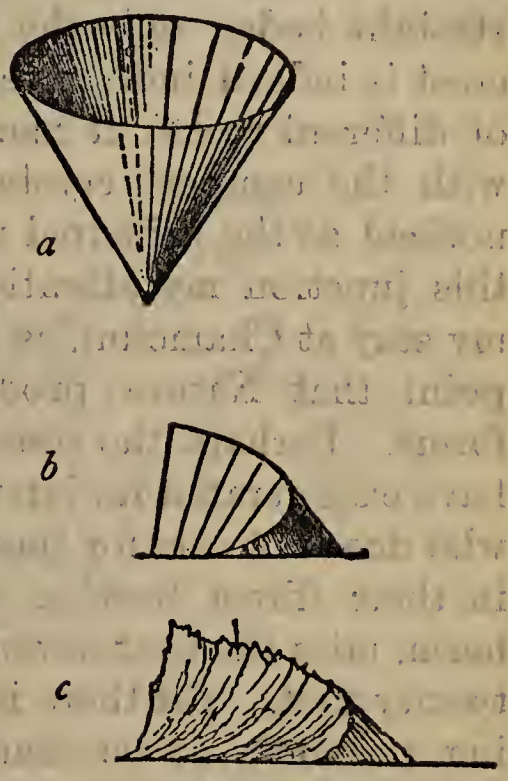


Fig. 53.

The form is obtained usually in the greatest perfection among the high ridges near the central chain, where the beds of the slaty crystallines are steep and hard. Perhaps the most interesting example I can choose for close examination will be that of a mountain in Chamouni, called the Aiguille Bouchard, now familiar to the eye of every traveller, being the ridge which rises, exactly opposite the Montanvert, beyond the Mer de Glace. The structure of this crest is best seen from near the foot of the Montanvert, on the road to the source of the Arveiron, whence the top of it, *a*, presents itself under the outline given rudely in the opposite plate (33), in which it will be seen that, while the main energy of the mountain mass tosses itself against the central chain of Mont Blanc (which is on the right hand), it is met by a group of counter-crests, like the recoil of a broken wave cast against it from the other side; and yet, as the recoiling water has a sympathy with the under swell of the very wave against which it clashes, the whole mass writhes together in strange unity of

mountain passion; so that it is almost impossible to persuade one's self, after long looking at it, that the crests have not indeed been once fused and tossed into the air by a tempest which had mastery over them, as the winds have over ocean.

§ 12. And yet, if we examine the crest structure closely, we shall find that nearly all these curvatures are obtained by Nature's skilful handling of perfectly straight beds,—only the meeting of those two waves of crest is indeed indicative of the meeting of two masses of different rocks; it marks that junction of the slaty with the compact crystallines, which has before been noticed as the principal mystery of rock structure. To this junction my attention was chiefly directed during my stay at Chamouni, as I found it was always at that point that Nature produced the loveliest mountain forms. Perhaps the time I gave to the study of it may have exaggerated its interest in my eyes; and the reader who does not care for these geological questions, except in their direct bearing upon art, may, without much harm, miss the next seven paragraphs, and go on at the twenty-first. Yet there is one point, in a Turner drawing presently to be examined, which I cannot explain without inflicting the tediousness even of these seven upon him.

§ 13. First, then, the right of the Aiguille Bouchard to be called a crest at all depends, not on the slope from *a* to *b*, Plate 33, but on that from *a* to *h*. The slope from *a* to *b* is a perspective deception; *b* is much the highest point of the two. Seen from the village of Chamouni, the range presents itself under the outline Fig. 54, the same points in each figure being indicated by the same letters. From the end of the valley the supremacy of the mass *b c* is still more notable. It is altogether with mountains as with human spirits, you never know which is greatest till they are far away.

§ 14. It will be observed also, that the beauty of the crest, in both Plate 33 and Fig. 54, depends on the gradually increasing steepness of the lines of slope between *a* and *b*. This is in great part deceptive, being obtained by the receding of the crest into a great mountain crater, or basin, as explained in § 11. But this very recession is a matter of interest, for it takes place exactly on the line above spoken of, where the slaty crystallines of the crest join the compact crystallines of the aiguilles; at which junction a correspondent chasm or recession, of

FIG. 54.

some kind or another, takes place along the whole front of Mont Blanc.

§ 15. In the third paragraph of the last chapter we had occasion to refer to the junction of the slaty and compact crystallines at the roots of the aiguilles. It will be seen in the figure there given, that this change is not sudden, but gradated. The rocks to be joined are of the two types represented in Fig. 3, p. 143 (for convenience sake I shall in the rest of this chapter call the slaty rock gneiss, and the compact rock protogine, its usual French name). Fig. 55 shows the general manner of junction, beds of gneiss occurring in the middle of the protogine,

and of protogine in the gneiss; sometimes one touching the other so closely, that a hammer-stroke breaks off a piece of both; sometimes one passing into the other by a gradual change, like the zones of a rainbow; the only general phenomenon being this, that the higher up the hill the gneiss is, the harder it is (so that while it often yields to the pressure of the finger down in the valley, on the Montanvert it is nearly as hard as protogine); and, on the other hand, the lower down the hill, or the

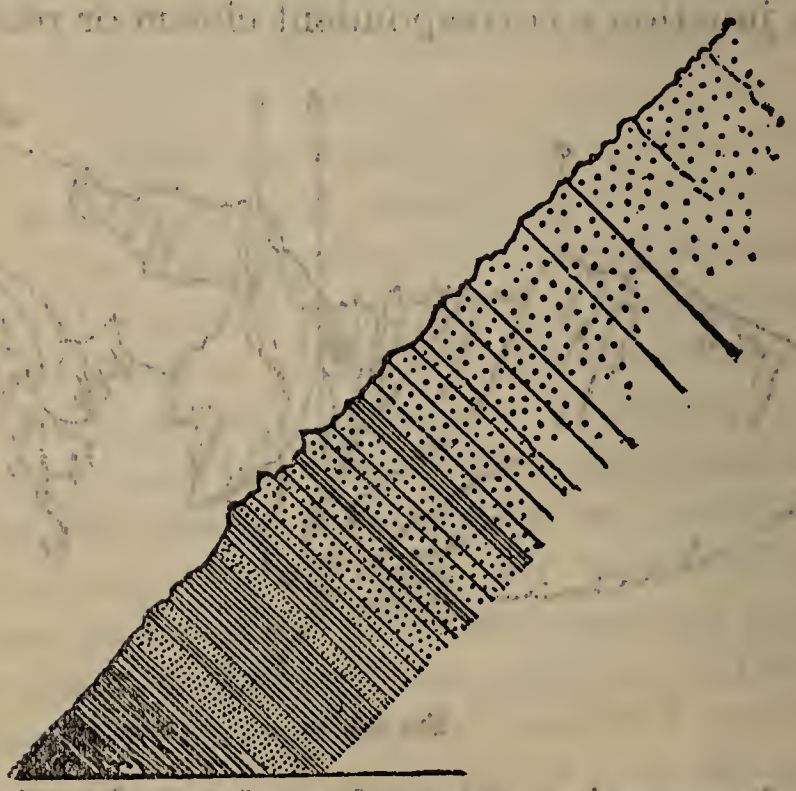


Fig. 55.

nearer the gneiss, the protogine is, the finer it is in grain. But still the actual transition from one to the other is usually within a few fathoms; and it is that transition, and the preparation for it, which causes the great step, or jag, on the flank of the chain, and forms the tops of the Aiguille Bouchard, Charmoz ridges, Tapia, Montagne de la Côte, Montagne de Taconay, and Aiguille du Goûté.

§ 16. But what most puzzled me was the intense *straightness* of the lines of the gneis beds, dipping, as it seemed,

under the Mont Blanc. For it has been a chief theory with geologists that these central protogine rocks have once been in fusion, and have risen up in molten fury, overturning and altering all the rocks around. But every day, as I looked at the crested flanks of the Mont Blanc, I saw more plainly the exquisite *regularity* of the slopes of the beds, ruled, it seemed, with an architect's rule, along the edge of their every flake from the summits to the valley. And this surprised me the more because I had always heard it stated that the beds of the lateral crests, *a* and *b*, Fig. 56, varied in slope, getting less and less inclined as they descended, so as to arrange themselves somewhat in the form of a fan. It

Fig. 56.

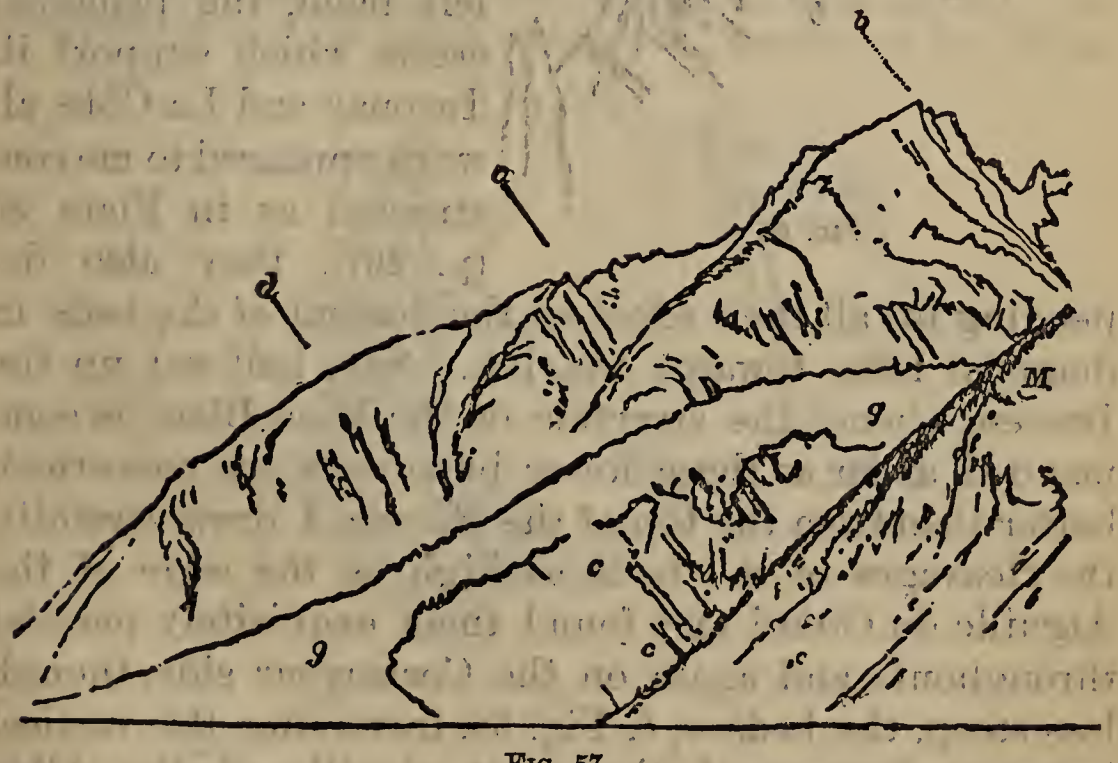


Fig. 57.

may be so; but I can only say that all my observations and drawings give an opposite report, and that the beds seemed invariably to present themselves to the eye and the pencil in parallelism, modified only by

the phenomena just explained (§§ 9, 10). Thus the entire mass of the Aiguille Bouchard, of which only the top is represented in Plate 33, appeared to me in profile, as in Fig. 57, dependent for all its effect and character on the descent of the beds in the directions of the dotted lines, *a*, *b*, *d*. The interrupting space, *g g*, is the Glacier des Bois · M is the Montanvert; *c c*, the rocks under the glacier, much worn by the fall of avalanches, but, for all that, showing the steep lines still with the greatest distinctness. Again, looking down the valley instead of up, so as to put the Mont Blanc on the left hand, the principal crests which support it, Taconay and La Côte, always appeared to me constructed as in Plate 35 (p. 267), they also depending for all their effect on the descent of the beds in diagonal lines towards the left. Nay, half-way up the Breven, whence the structure of the Mont Blanc is commanded, as far as these lower buttresses are concerned, better than from the top of the Breven, I drew carefully the cleavages of the beds, as high as the edge of the Aiguille du Goûté, and found them exquisitely parallel throughout; and again on the Cormayeur side, though less steep, the beds *a*, *b*, Fig. 58, traversing the vertical irregular fissures of the great aiguille of the Allée Blanche, as seen over the Lac de Combal, still appeared to me perfectly regular and parallel.* I have not had

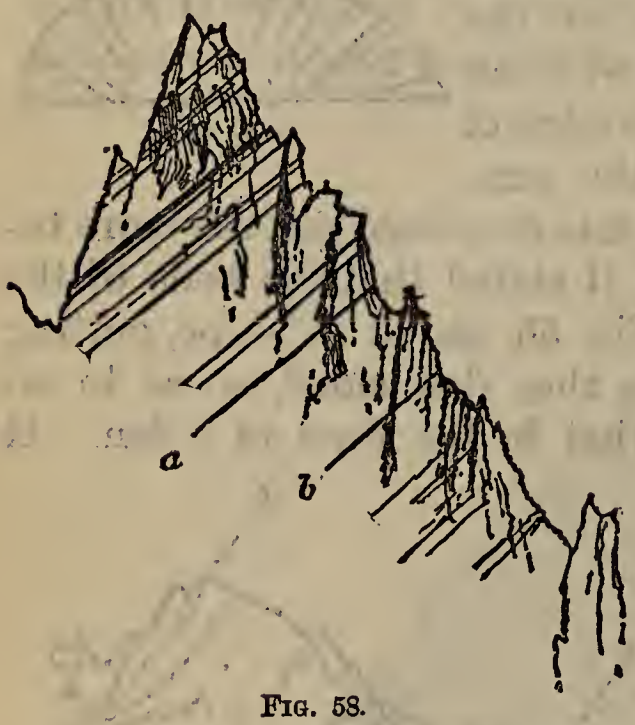


Fig. 58.

* Nor did any nearer observations ever induce me to form any contrary opinion. It is not easy to get any consistent series of *measure-*

time to trace them round, through the Aiguille de Bionassay, and above the Col de Bonhomme, though I know the relations of the beds of limestone to the gneiss on the latter col are most notable and interesting. But,

ments of the slope of these gneiss beds; for, although parallel on the great scale, they admit many varieties of dip in minor projections. But all my notes unite, whether at the bottom or top of the great slope of the Montanvert and La Côte, in giving an angle of from 60° to 80° with the horizon; the consistent angle being about 75°. I cannot be mistaken in the measurements themselves, however inconclusive observations on minor portions of rock may be; for I never mark an angle unless enough of the upper or lower surface of the beds be smoothly exposed to admit of my pole being adjusted to it by the spirit-level. The pole then indicates the strike of the beds, and a quadrant with a plumb-line their dip; to all intents and purposes accurately. There is a curious distortion of the beds in the ravine between the Glacier des Bois and foot of the Montanvert, near the ice, about a thousand feet above the valley; the beds there seem to bend suddenly back under the glacier, and in some places to be quite vertical. On the opposite side of the glacier, below the Chapeau, the dip of the

Fig. 59.

limestone under the gneiss, with the intermediate bed, seven or eight feet thick, of the gray porous rock which the French call *cargneule*, is highly interesting; but it is so concealed by débris and the soil of the pine forests, as to be difficult to examine to any extent. On the whole,

as far as was required for any artistical purposes, I perfectly ascertained the fact that, whatever their real structure might be, these beds did appear, through the softer contours of the hill, as straight and parallel; that they

the best position for getting the angle of the beds accurately, is the top of the Tapia, a little below the junction there of the granite and gneiss (see notice of this junction in Appendix 2); a point from which the summit of the Aiguille du Goûté bears 11° south of west, and that of the Aiguille Bouchard 17° north of east, the Aiguille Dru 5½° or 6° north of east, the peak of it appearing behind the Petit Charmoz. The beds emerging from the turf under the spectator's feet may be brought parallel by the eye with the slopes of the Aiguille du Goûté on one side, and the Bouchard (and base of Aiguille d'Argentière) on the other; striking as nearly as possible from summit to summit through that on which the spectator stands, or from about 10° north of east to 10°

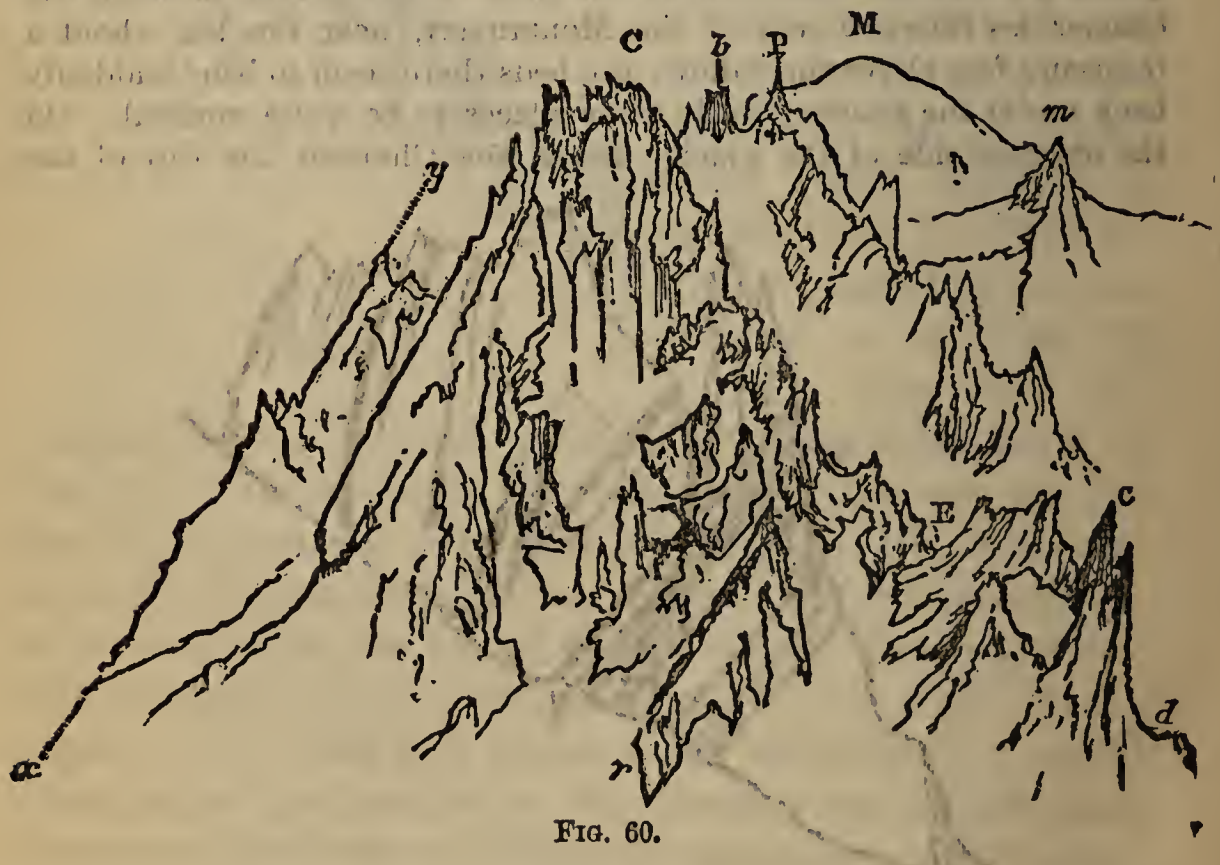


Fig. 60.

south of west, and dipping with exquisite uniformity at an angle of 74 degrees with the horizon. But what struck me as still more strange was, that from this point I could distinctly see traces of the same straight structure running through the Petit Charmoz, and the roots of the aiguilles themselves, as in Fig. 59; nor could I ever, in the course of countless observations, fairly determine any point where this

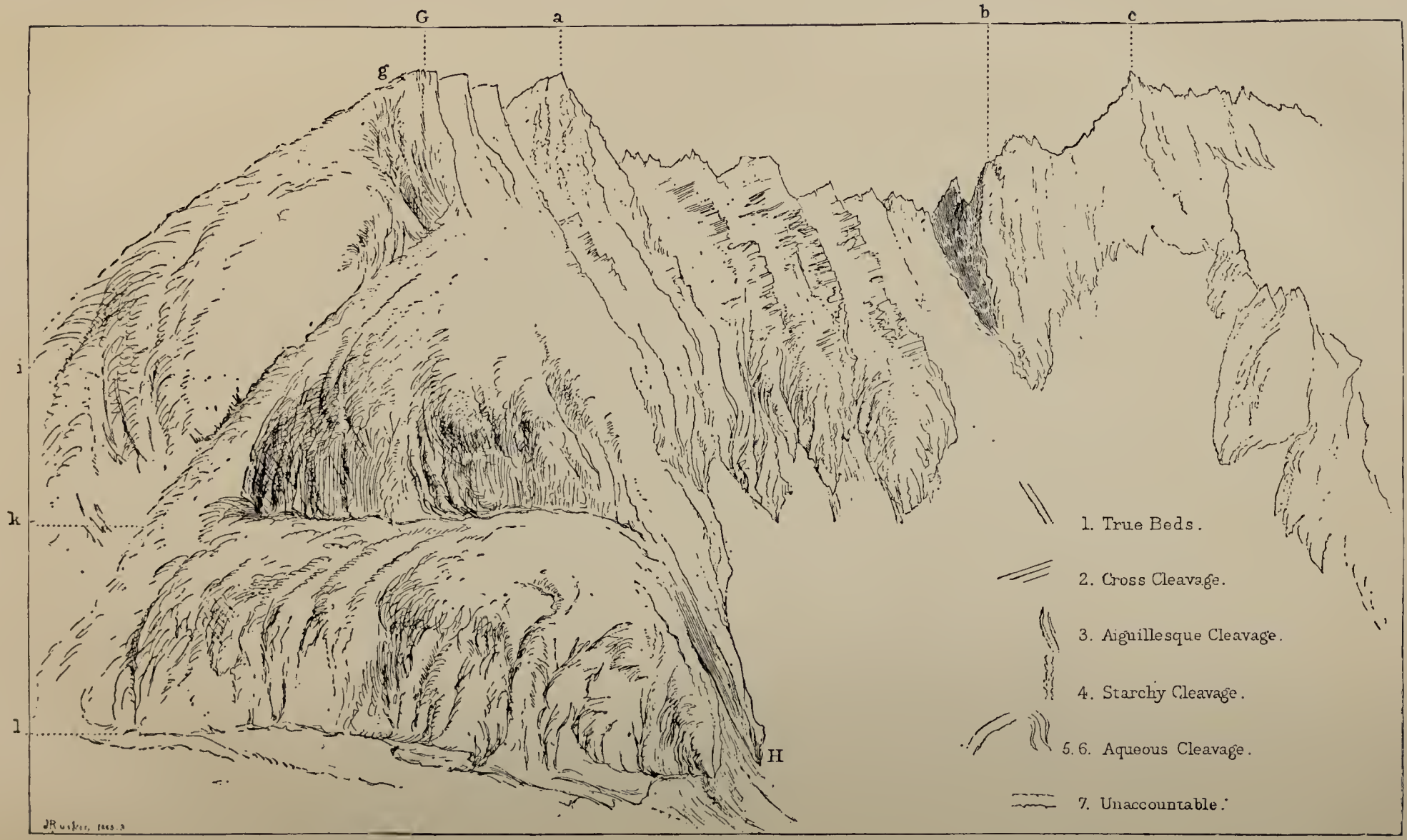


PLATE XXXIV.—CLEAVAGES OF AIGUILLE BOUCHARD.

continued to appear so until near the tops of the crests; and that those tops seemed, in some mysterious way, dependent on the junction of the gneissitic beds with, or their transition into, the harder protogine of the aiguilles.

Look back to Plate 33. The peak of the Bouchard, *a*, is of gneiss, and its beds run down in lines originally straight, but more or less hollowed by weathering, to the point *h*, where they plunge under débris. But the point *b* is, I believe, of protogine; and all the opposed writhing of the waves of rock to the right appears to be in consequence of the junction.

§ 17. The way in which these curves are produced cannot, however, be guessed at until we examine the junction more closely. Ascending about five hundred feet above the cabin of the Montanvert, the opposite crest of the Bouchard, from *a* to *c*, Plate 33, is seen more in front, expanded into the jagged line, *a* to *c*, Plate 34, and the beds, with their fractures, are now seen clearly throughout the mass, namely:

1st. (See references on plate.) The true gneiss beds dipping down in the direction G H, the point H being the same as *h* in Plate 33. These are the beds so notable for their accurate straightness and parallelism.

2d. The smooth fractures which in the middle of the etching seem to divide the column of rock into a kind

slaty structure altogether had ceased. It seemed only to get less and less traceable towards the centre of the mass of Mont Blanc; and, from the ridge of the Aiguille Bouchard itself, at the point *a* in Plate 33, whence, looking south-west, the aiguilles can be seen in the most accurate profile obtainable throughout the valley of Chamouni, I noticed a very singular parallelism even on the south-east side of the Charmoz, *xy* (Fig. 60), as if the continued influence of this cleavage were carried on from the Little Charmoz, *c*, *d* (in which, seen on the opposite side, I had traced it as in Fig. 59), through the central mass of rock *r*. In this profile, M is the Mont Blanc itself; *m*, the Aiguille du Midi; P, Aiguille du Plan; *b*, Aiguille Blaitière; C, Great Charmoz; *c*, Petit Charmoz; E, passage called de l'Etala.

of brickwork. They are very neat and sharp, running nearly at right angles with the true beds.*

3d. The curved fractures of the aiguilles (seen first under the letter *b*, and seeming to push outwards against the gneiss beds †) continuing through *c* and the spur below.

4th. An irregular cleavage, something like that of starch, showing itself in broken vertical lines.

5th. Writhing lines, cut by water. These have the greatest possible influence on the aspect of the precipice: they are not merely caused by torrents, but by falls of winter snow, and stones from the glacier moraines, so that the cliff being continually worn away at the foot of it, is wrought into a great amphitheatre, of which the receding sweep continually varies the apparent steepness of the crest, as already explained. I believe in ancient times the great Glacier des Bois itself used to fill this amphitheatre, and break right up against the base of the Bouchard.

6th. Curvatures worn by water over the back of the crest towards the valley, in the direction *g i*.

7th. A tendency (which I do not understand) to form horizontal masses at the levels *k* and *l*.‡

§ 18. The reader may imagine what strange harmonies and changes of line must result throughout the mass of the mountain from the varied prevalence of one or

* Many geologists think they *are* the true beds. They run across the gneissitic folia, and I hold with De Saussure, and consider them a cleavage.

† I tried in vain to get along the ridge of the Bouchard to this junction, the edge of the precipice between *a* and *b* (Plate 33) being too broken; but the point corresponds so closely to that of the junction of the gneiss and protogine on the Charmoz ridge, that, adding the evidence of the distant contour, I have no doubt as to the general relations of the rocks.

‡ De Saussure often refers to these as "assaissements." They occur, here and there, in the aiguilles themselves.

PLATE XXXV.—CRESTS OF LA CÔTE AND TACONAY.

other of these secret inclinations of its rocks (modified, also, as they are by perpetual deceptions of perspective), and how completely the rigidity or parallelism of any one of them is conquered by the fitful urgencies of the rest,—a sevenfold action seeming to run through every atom of crag. For the sake of clearness, I have shown in this plate merely leading lines; the next (Plate 35, opposite) will give some idea of the complete aspect of two of the principal crests on the Mont Blanc flanks, known as the Montagne de la Côte, and Mon-

FIG. 61.

tagne de Taconay, C and *t* in Fig. 22, at page 211. In which note, first, that the eminences marked *a a*, *b b*, *c c*, here, in the reference figure (61), are in each of the mountains correspondent, and indicate certain changes in the conditions of their beds at those points. I have no doubt the two mountains were once one mass, and that they have been sawn asunder by the great glacier of Taconay, which descends between them; and similarly the Montagne de la Côte sawn from the Tapia by the glacier des Bossons, B B in reference figure.

§ 19. Note, secondly, the general tendency in each

mountain to throw itself into concave curves towards the Mont Blanc, and descend in rounded slopes to the valley; more or less interrupted by the direct manifestation of the straight beds, which are indeed, in this view of Taconay, the principal features of it. They necessarily become, however, more prominent in the outline etching than in the scene itself, because in reality the delicate cleavages are lost in distance or in mist, and the effects of light bring out the rounded forms of the larger masses; and wherever the clouds fill the hollows between, as they are apt to do (the glaciers causing a chillness in the ravines, while the wind, blowing *up* the larger valleys, clears the edges of the crests), the summits show themselves as in Plate 36, dividing, with their dark frontlets, the perpetual sweep of the glaciers and the clouds.*

§ 20. Of the aqueous curvatures of this crest, we shall have more to say presently; meantime let us especially observe how the providential laws of beauty, acting with reversed data, arrive at similar results in the aiguilles and crests. In the aiguilles, which are of such hard rock that the fall of snow and trickling of streams do not affect them, the inner structure is so disposed as to bring out the curvatures by the mere fracture. In the crests and lower hills, which are of softer rock, and largely influenced by external violence, the inner structure is straight, and the necessary curvatures are produced by perspective, by external modulation, and by the balancing of adverse influences of cleavage. But, as the accuracy of an artist's eye is usually shown by his perceiv-

* The aqueous curves and roundings on the nearer crest (La Côte) are peculiarly tender, because the gneiss of which it is composed is softer in grain than that of the Bouchard, and remains so even to the very top of the peak, *a*, in Fig. 61, where I found it mixed with a yellowish and somewhat sandy quartz rock, and generally much less protogenic than is usual at such elevations on other parts of the chai

PLATE XXXVI.—CRESTS OF LA CÔTE.

ing the inner anatomy which regulates growth and form, and as in the aiguilles, while we watch them, we are continually discovering new curves, so in the crests, while we watch them, we are continually discovering new straightnesses; and nothing more distinguishes good mountain-drawing, or mountain-seeing, from careless and inefficient mountain-drawing, than the observance of the marvellous parallelisms which exist among the beds of the crests.

§ 21. It indeed happens, not infrequently, that in hills composed of somewhat soft rock, the aqueous contours will so prevail over the straight cleavage as to leave nothing manifest at the first glance but sweeping lines like those of waves. Fig. 43, p. 49, is the crest of a mountain on the north of the valley of Chamouni, known, from the rapid decay and fall of its crags, as the Aiguille *Pourri;* and at first there indeed seems little distinction between its contours and those of the summit of a sea-wave. Yet I think also, if it *were* a wave, we should immediately suppose the tide was running towards the right hand; and if we examined the reason for this supposition, we should perceive that along the ridge the steepest falls of crag were always on the right-hand side; indicating a tendency in them to break rather in the direction of the line *a b* than any other. If we go halfway down the Montanvert, and examine the left side of the crest somewhat more closely, we shall find this tendency still more definitely visible, as in Fig. 62.

§ 22. But what, then, has given rise to all those coiled plungings of the crest hither and thither, yet with such strange unity of motion?

Yes. There is the cloud. How the top of the hill was first shaped so as to let the currents of water act upon it in so varied a way we know not, but I think that the appearance of *interior* force of elevation is for the most part deceptive. The series of beds would be

found, if examined in section, very uniform in their arrangement, only a little harder in one place, and more delicate in another. A stream receives a slight impulse this way or that, at the top of the hill, but increases in energy and sweep as it descends, gathering into itself others from its sides, and uniting their power with its own. A single knot of quartz occurring in a flake of slate at the crest of the ridge may alter the entire destinies of the mountain form. It may turn the little rivu-

Fig. 62.

let of water to the right or left, and that little turn will be to the future direction of the gathering stream what the touch of a finger on the barrel of a rifle would be to the direction of the bullet. Each succeeding year increases the importance of every determined form, and arranges in masses yet more and more harmonious, the promontories shaped by the sweeping of the eternal waterfalls.

§ 23. The importance of the results thus obtained by the slightest change of direction in the infant stream-

lets, furnishes an interesting type of the formation of human characters by habit. Every one of those notable ravines and crags is the expression, not of any sudden violence done to the mountain, but of its little *habits*, persisted in continually. It was created with one ruling instinct; but its destiny depended nevertheless, for effective result, on the direction of the small and all but invisible tricklings of water, in which the first shower of rain found its way down its sides. The feeblest, most insensible oozings of the drops of dew among its dust were in reality arbiters of its eternal form; commissioned, with a touch more tender than that of a child's finger,—as silent and slight as the fall of a half-checked tear on a maiden's cheek,—to fix forever the forms of peak and precipice, and hew those leagues of lifted granite into the shapes that were to divide the earth and its kingdoms. Once the little stone evaded,—once the dim furrow traced,—and the peak was forever invested with its majesty, the ravine forever doomed to its degradation. Thenceforward, day by day, the subtle habit gained in power; the evaded stone was left with wider basement; the chosen furrow deepened with swifter-sliding wave; repentance and arrest were alike impossible, and hour after hour saw written in larger and rockier characters upon the sky, the history of the choice that had been directed by a drop of rain, and of the balance that had been turned by a grain of sand.

§ 24. Such are the principal laws, relating to the crested mountains, for the expression of which we are to look to art; and we shall accordingly find good and intelligent mountain-drawing distinguished from bad mountain-drawing, by an indication, first, of the artist's recognition of some great harmony among the summits, and of their tendency to throw themselves into tidal waves, closely resembling those of the sea itself; sometimes in free tossing towards the sky, but more fre-

quently still in the form of *breakers*, concave and steep on one side, convex and less steep on the other; secondly, by his indication of straight beds or fractures, continually stiffening themselves through the curves in some given direction.

§ 25. Fig. 63 is a fac-simile of a piece of the background in Albert Durer's woodcut of the binding of the great Dragon in the Apocalypse. It is one of his most careless and rudest pieces of drawing; yet, observe in it

Fig. 63.

how notably the impulse of the breaking wave is indicated; and note farther, how different a thing good drawing may be from delicate *drawing* on the one hand, and how different it must be from ignorant drawing on the other. Woodcutting, in Durer's days, had reached no delicacy capable of expressing subtle detail or aërial perspective. But all the subtlety and aërial perspective of modern days are useless, and even barbarous, if they fail in the expression of the essential mountain facts.

§ 26. It will be noticed, however, that in this example

of Durer's, the recognition of straightness of line does not exist, and that for this reason the hills look soft and earthy, not rocky.

So, also, in the next example, Fig. 64, the crest in the middle distance is exceedingly fine in its expression of

Fig. 64.

mountain force; the two ridges of it being thrown up like the two edges of a return wave that has just been beaten back from a rock. It is still, however, somewhat wanting in the expression of straightness, and therefore slightly unnatural. It was not people's way in the Middle Ages to look at mountains carefully enough to discover the most subtle elements of their structure. Yet

in the next example, Fig. 65, the parallelism and rigidity are definitely indicated, the crest outline being, however, less definite.

Note, also (in passing), the entire equality of the lines in all these examples, whether turned to dark or light. All good outline drawing, as noticed in the chapter on finish, agrees in this character.

Fig. 65.

§ 27. The next figure (66) is interesting because it furnishes one of the few instances in which Titian definitely took a suggestion from the Alps, as he saw them from his house at Venice. It is from an old print of a shepherd with a flock of sheep by the sea-side, in which he has introduced a sea distance, with the Venetian church of St. Helena, some subordinate buildings resembling those of Murano, and this piece of cloud and mountain. The peak represented is one of the greater Tyrolese Alps, which shows itself from Venice behind an opening in the chain, and is their culminating point. In reality the mass is of the shape given in Fig. 67. Titian has modified it into an energetic crest, showing his feeling for the form, but I have no doubt that the woodcut reverses Titian's original work (whatever it was), and that he gave the crest the true inclination to the right, or east, which it has in nature.

§ 28. Now, it not infrequently happens that in Claude's distances he introduces actual outlines of Capri, Ischia,

Monte St. Angelo, the Alban Mount, and other chains about Rome and Naples, more or less faithfully copied from nature. When he does so, confining himself to mere outline, the gray contours seen against the dis-

Fig. 66.

tance are often satisfactory enough; but as soon as he brings one of them nearer, so as to require any drawing within its mass, it is quite curious to see the state of paralysis into which he is thrown for want of any perception of the mountain anatomy. Fig. 68 is

one of the largest hills I can find in the Liber Veritatis (No. 86), and it will be seen that there are only a few lines inserted towards the edges, drawn in the direction

Fig. 67.

of the sides of the heap, or cone, wholly without consciousness of any interior structure.

§ 29. I put below it, outlined also in the rudest way (for as I take the shade away from the Liber Veritatis, I am bound also to take it away from Turner), Fig. 69, a bit of the crags in the drawing of Loch Coriskin,

Fig. 68.

partly described already in § 5 of the chapter on the Inferior Mountains in Vol. I. The crest form is, indeed, here accidentally prominent, and developed to a degree rare even with Turner; but note, besides this, the way in which Turner leans on the *centre* and body of the hill,

not on its edge; marking its strata stone by stone, just as a good figure painter, drawing a limb, marks the fall and rise of the joint, letting the outline sink back softened; and compare the exactly opposite method of

Fig. 69.

Claude, holding for life to his outline, as a Greek navigator holds to the shore.*

* It is worth while noting here, in comparing Fig. 66 and Fig. 68, how entirely our judgment of some kinds of art depends upon knowledge, not on feeling. Any person unacquainted with hills would think Claude's right and Titian's ridiculous: but, after inquiring a little farther into the matter, we find Titian's a careless and intense expression of true knowledge, and Claude's a slow and plausible expression of total ignorance.

It will be observed that Fig. 69 is one of the second order of crests, *d*, Fig. 48. The next instance given is of the first order of crests, *c*, in the same figure.

§ 30. Lest, however, it should be thought that I have unfairly chosen my examples, let me take an instance at once less singular and more elaborate.

We saw in our account of Turnerian topography, Chap. II., § 14, that it had been necessary for the painter, in his modification of the view in the ravine of Faido, to introduce a passage from among the higher peaks; which, being thus intended expressly to convey the general impression of their character, must sufficiently illustrate what Turner felt that character to be. Observe: it could not be taken from the great central aiguilles, for none such exist at all near Faido; it could only be an expression of what Turner considered the noblest attributes of the hills next to these in elevation,—that is to say, those which we are now examining.

I have etched the portion of the picture which includes this passage, on page 277, on its own scale, including the whole couloir above the gallery, and the gallery itself, with the rocks beside it.* And now, if the reader will look back to Plate 20, which is the outline of the *real* scene, he will have a perfect example, in comparing the two, of the operation of invention of the highest order on a given subject. I should recommend him to put a piece of tracing paper over the etching, Plate 37, and with his pen to follow some of the lines of it as carefully as he can, until he feels their complexity, and the redundance of the imaginative power which amplified the simple theme, furnished by the natural scene, with such detail; and then let him observe

* This etching, like that of the Bolton rocks, is prepared for future mezzotint, and looks harsh in its present state; but will mark all the more clearly several points of structure in question. The diamond-shaped rock, however (M, in the reference figure), is not so conspicuous here as it will be when the plate is finished, being relieved in light from the mass behind, as also the faint distant crests in dark from the sky.

PLATE XXXVII.—CRESTS OF THE SLATY CRYSTALLINES.

what great mountain laws Turner has been striving to express in all these additions.

§ 31. The cleavages which govern the whole are precisely the same as those of the Aiguille Bouchard, only wrought into grander combinations. That the reader may the better distinguish them, I give the leading lines coarsely for reference in Fig. 70, on page 280. The cleavages and lines of force are the following:

1. A B and associated lines *a b*, *a b*, &c., over the whole plate. True beds or cleavage beds (*g h* in Aiguille Bouchard, Plate 34); here, observe, closing in retiring perspective with exquisite subtlety, and giving the great unity of radiation to the whole mass.
2. D E and associated lines *d e*, *d e*, over all the plate. Cross cleavage, the second in Aiguille Bouchard; straight and sharp. Forming here the series of crests at B and D.
3. *r s*, *r s*. Counter-crests, closely corresponding to counter-fracture, the third in Aiguille Bouchard.
4. *m n*, *m n*, &c., over the whole. Writhing aqueous lines falling gradually into the cleavages. Fifth group in Aiguille Bouchard. The starchy cleavage is not seen here, it being not generally characteristic of the crests, and present in the Bouchard only accidentally.

Fig. 71.

5. *x x x*. Sinuous lines worn by the water, indicative of some softness or flaws in the rock; these probably the occasion or consequence of the formation of the great precipice or brow on the right. We shall have more to say of them in Chap. XVII.

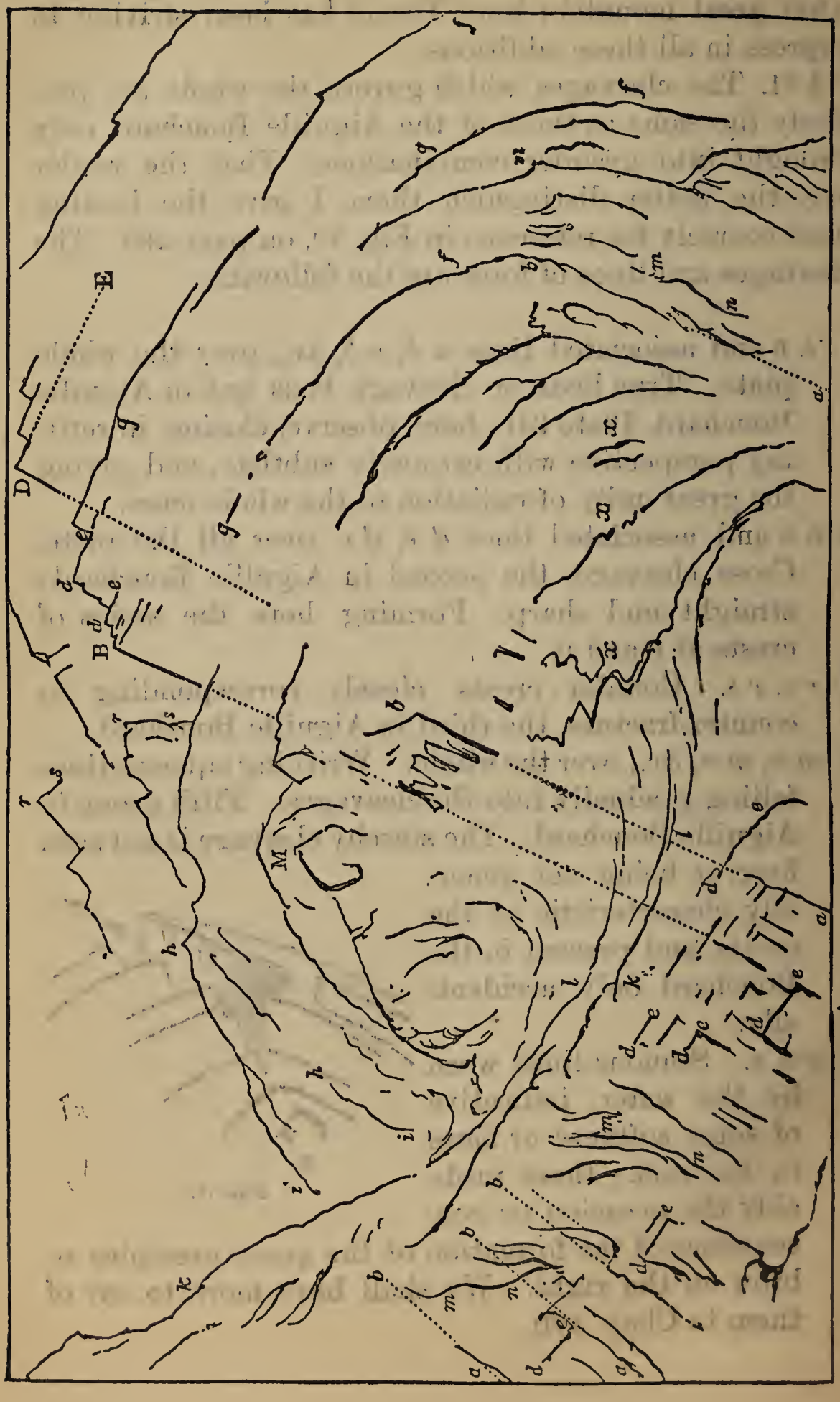


Fig. 70.

6. *g f, g f,* &c. Broad aqueous or glacial curvatures. The sixth group in Aiguille Bouchard.
7. *k l, k l.* Concave curves wrought by the descending avalanche; peculiar, of course, to this spot.
8. *i h, i h.* Secondary convex curves, glacial or aqueous, corresponding to *g f*, but wrought into the minor secondary ravine. This secondary ravine is associated with the opponent aiguillesque masses *r s;* and the cause of the break or gap between these and the crests B D is indicated by the elbow or joint of nearer rock, M, where the distortion of the beds or change in their nature first takes place. Turner's idea of the structure of the whole mass has evidently been that in section it was as in Fig. 71, snapped asunder by elevation, with a nucleus at M, which, allowing for perspective, is precisely on the line of the chasm running in the direction of the arrow; but he gives more of the curved aiguillesque fracture to these upper crests, which are greater in elevation (and we saw, some time ago, that the higher the rock the harder). And that nucleus of change at M, the hinge, as it were, on which all these promontories of upper crest revolve, is the first or nearest of the evaded stones, which have determined the course of streams and nod of cliffs throughout the chain.

§ 32. I can well believe that the reader will doubt the possibility of all this being intended by Turner: and *intended,* in the ordinary sense, it was not. It was simply seen and instinctively painted, according to the command of the imaginative dream, as the true Griffin was, and as all noble things are. But if the reader fancies that the apparent truth came by mere chance, or that I am imagining purpose and arrangement where they do not exist, let him be once for all assured that no man goes through the kind of work which, by this time, he

must be beginning to perceive I *have* gone through, either for the sake of deceiving others, or with any great likelihood of deceiving himself. He who desires to deceive the picture-purchasing public may do so cheaply; and it is easy to bring almost any kind of art into notice without climbing Alps or measuring cleavages. But any one, on the other hand, who desires to ascertain facts, and will refer all art directly to nature for many laborious years, will not at last find himself an easy prey to groundless enthusiasms, or erroneous fancies. Foolish people are fond of repeating a story which has gone the full round of the artistical world,—that Turner, some day, somewhere, said to somebody (time, place, or person never being ascertainable), that I discovered in his pictures things which he did himself not know were there. Turner was not a person apt to say things of this kind; being generally, respecting all the movements of his own mind, as silent as a granite crest; and if he ever did say it, was probably laughing at the person to whom he was speaking. But he *might* have said it in the most perfect sincerity; nay, I am quite sure that, to a certain extent, the case really was as he is reported to have declared, and that he neither was aware of the value of the truths he had seized nor understood the nature of the instinct that combined them. And yet the truth was assuredly apprehended, and the instinct assuredly present and imperative; and any artists who try to imitate the smallest portion of his work will find that no happy chances will, for them, gather together the resemblances of fact, nor, for them, mimic the majesty of invention.*

* An anecdote is related, more to our present purpose, and better authenticated, inasmuch as the name of the artist to whom Turner was speaking at the time is commonly stated, though I do not give it here, not having asked his permission. The story runs that this artist (one of our leading landscape painters) was complaining to Turner that, after going to Domo d'Ossola, to find the site of a particular view

§ 33. No happy chance—nay, no happy thought—no perfect knowledge—will ever take the place of that mighty unconsciousness. I have often had to repeat that Turner, in the ordinary sense of the words, neither knew nor thought so much as other men. Whenever his *perception* failed—that is to say, with respect to scientific truths which produce no results palpable to the eye—he fell into the frankest errors. For instance, in such a thing as the relation of position between the rainbow and the sun, there is not any definitely visible connection between them; it needs attention and calculation to discover that the centre of the rainbow is the shadow of the spectator's head.* And attention or calculation of this abstract kind Turner appears to have been utterly incapable of; but if he drew a piece of drapery, in which every line of the fold has a *visible* relation to the points of suspension, not a merely calculable one, this relation he will see to the last thread; and thus he traces the order of the mountain crests to their last stone, not because he knows anything of geology, but because he instinctively seizes the last and finest traces of any visible law.

§ 34. He was, however, especially obedient to these laws of the crests, because he heartily loved them. We saw in the early part of this chapter how the crest out-

which had struck him several years before, he had entirely failed in doing so; "it looked different when he went back again." "What," replied Turner, "do you not know yet, at your age, that you ought to *paint* your *impressions?*"

* So, in the exact length or shape of shadows in general, he will often be found quite inaccurate; because the irregularity caused in shadows by the shape of what they fall *on*, as well as what they fall from, renders the law of connection untraceable by the eye or the instinct. The chief *visible* thing about a shadow is, that it is always of some form which nobody would have thought of; and this visible principle Turner always seizes, sometimes wrongly in calculated fact, but always so rightly as to give more the look of a real shadow than anyone else.

lines harmonized with nearly every other beautiful form of natural objects, especially in the continuity of their external curves. This continuity was so grateful to Turner's heart that he would often go great lengths to serve it. For instance, in one of his drawings of the town of Lucerne he has first outlined the Mont Pilate in pencil, with a central peak, as indicated by the dotted line in Fig. 72. This is nearly true to the local fact; but being inconsistent with the general look of crests, and contrary to Turner's instincts, he strikes off the refractory summit, and, leaving his pencil outline still in the sky, touches with color only the contour shown by

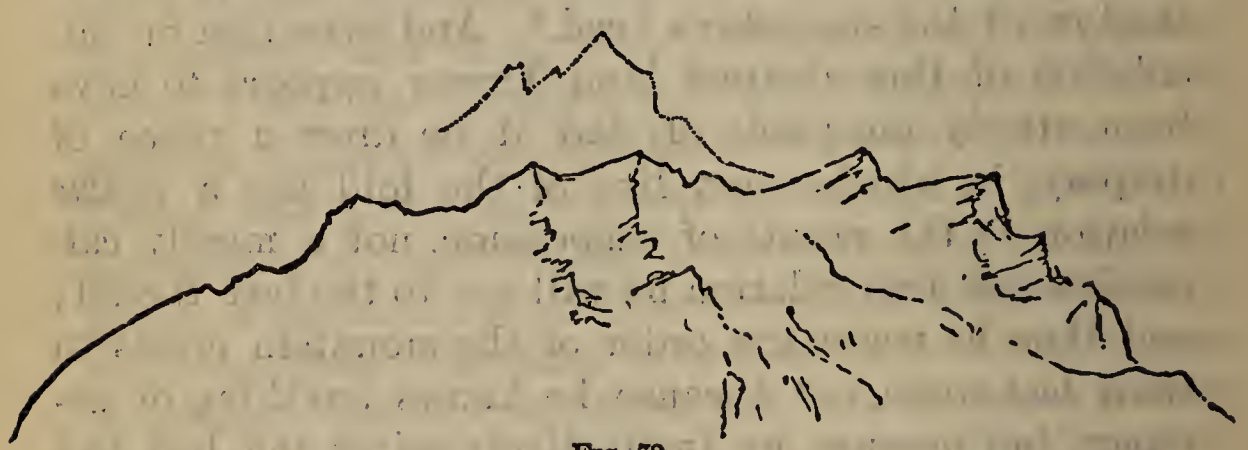


FIG. 72.

the continuous line in the figure, thus treating it just as we saw Titian did the great Alp of the Tyrol. He probably, however, would not have done this with so important a feature of the scene as the Mont Pilate, had not the continuous line been absolutely necessary to his composition, in order to oppose the peaked towers of the town, which were his principal subject; the form of the Pilate being seen only as a rosy shadow in the far off sky. We cannot, however, yet estimate the importance, in his mind, of this continuity of descending curve, until we come to the examination of the lower hill *flanks*, hitherto having been concerned only with their rocky summits; and before we leave those summits, or rather the harder rocks which compose them,

there is yet another condition of those rocks to be examined; and that the condition which is commonly the most interesting, namely, the Precipice. To this inquiry, however, we had better devote a separate chapter.

CHAPTER XVI.

RESULTING FORMS:—THIRDLY, PRECIPICES.

§ 1. The reader was, perhaps, surprised by the smallness of the number to which our foregoing analysis reduced Alpine summits bearing an ascertainedly peaked or pyramidal form. He might not be less so if I were to number the very few occasions on which I have seen a true precipice of any considerable height. I mean by a true precipice, one by which a plumb-line will swing clear, or without touching the face of it, if suspended from a point a foot or two beyond the brow. Not only are perfect precipices of this kind very rare, but even imperfect precipices, which often produce upon the eye as majestic an impression as if they were vertical, are nearly always curiously low in proportion to the general mass of the hills to which they belong. They are for the most part small steps or rents in large surfaces of mountain, and mingled by Nature among her softer forms, as cautiously and sparingly as the utmost exertion of his voice is, by a great speaker, with his tones of gentleness.

§ 2. Precipices, in the large plurality of cases, consist of the edge of a bed of rock, sharply fractured, in the manner already explained in Chap. XII., and are represented, in their connection with aiguilles and crests, by *c*, in Fig. 42, p. 247. When the bed of rock slopes backwards from the edge, as *a*, Fig. 73, a condition of precipice is obtained more or less peaked, very safe, and very

grand.* When the beds are horizontal, *b*, the precipice is steeper, more dangerous, but much less impressive. When the beds slope towards the precipice, the front of it overhangs, and the noblest effect is obtained which is possible in mountain forms of this kind.

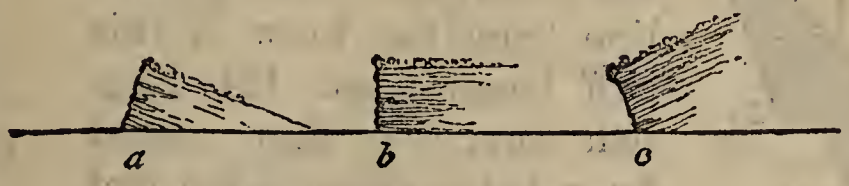


FIG. 73.

§ 3. Singular enough, the type *b* is in actual nature nearly always the most dangerous of the three, and *c* the safest, for horizontal beds are usually of the softest rocks, and their cliffs are caused by some violent agency in constant operation, as chalk cliffs by the wearing power of the sea, so that such rocks are continually falling, in one place or another. The form *a* may also be assumed by very soft rocks. But *c* cannot exist at all on the large scale, unless it is built of good materials, and it will then frequently stay in its fixed frown for ages.

§ 4. It frequently happens that a precipice is formed among the higher crests by the *sides* of vertical beds of slaty crystallines. Such rocks are rare, and never very high, but always beautiful in their smoothness of surface and general trenchant and firm expression. One of the most interesting I know is that of the summit of the Breven, on the north of the valley of Chamouni. The mountain is formed by vertical sheets of slaty crystallines, rather soft at the bottom, and getting harder and harder towards the top, until at the very summit it is hard and compact as the granite of Waterloo Bridge, though much finer in the grain, and breaking into per-

* Distinguished from a *crest* by being the *face* of a large continuous bed of rock, not the end of a ridge.

pendicular faces of rock so perfectly cut as to feel smooth to the hand. Fig. 4, p. 144, represents, of the real size, a bit which I broke from the edge of the cliff, the shaded part underneath being the surface which forms the precipice. The plumb-line from the brow of this cliff hangs clear 124 English feet; it is then caught by a ledge about three feet wide, from which another precipice falls to about twice the height of the first; but I had not line enough to measure it from the top, and could not get down to the ledge. When I say the line hangs *clear*, I mean when once it is off the actual brow of the cliff, which is a little rounded for about fourteen or fifteen feet, from *a* to *b*, in the section, Fig. 75. Then the rock recedes in an almost unbroken concave sweep, detaching itself from the plumb-line about two feet at the point *c* (the lateral dimensions are exaggerated to show the curve), and approaching it again at the ledge *d*, which is 124 feet below *a*. The plumb-line, fortunately, can be seen throughout its whole extent from a sharp bastion of the precipice farther on, for the face of the cliff runs, in horizontal plan, very nearly to the magnetic north and south, as shown in Fig. 74, the plumb-line swinging at *a*, and seen from the advanced point P. It would give a similar result at any other part of the cliff face, but may be most conveniently cast from the point *a*, a little below, and to the north of the summit.

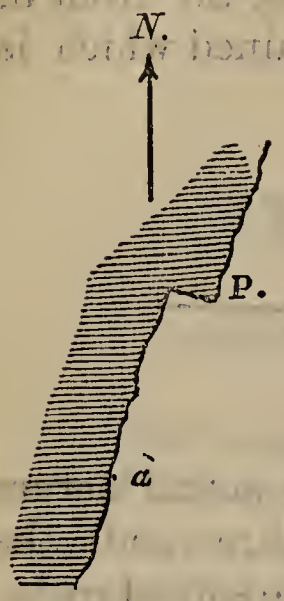


Fig. 74.

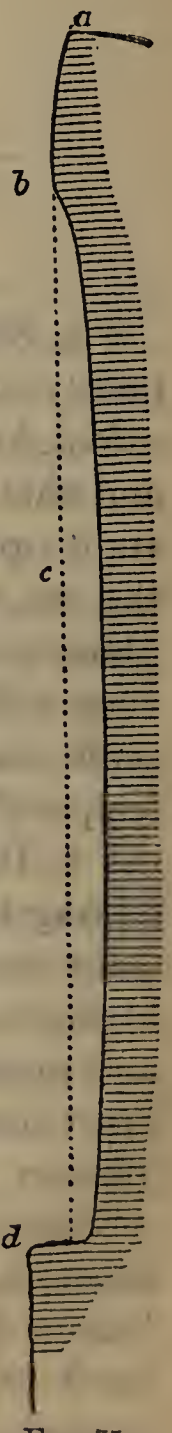


Fig. 75.

§ 5. But although the other divisions of this precipice, below the ledge which stops the plummet, give it altogether a height of about five hundred feet,* the whole

* The contour of the whole cliff, seen from near its foot as it rises above the shoulder of the Breven, is as at Fig. 76 below. The part

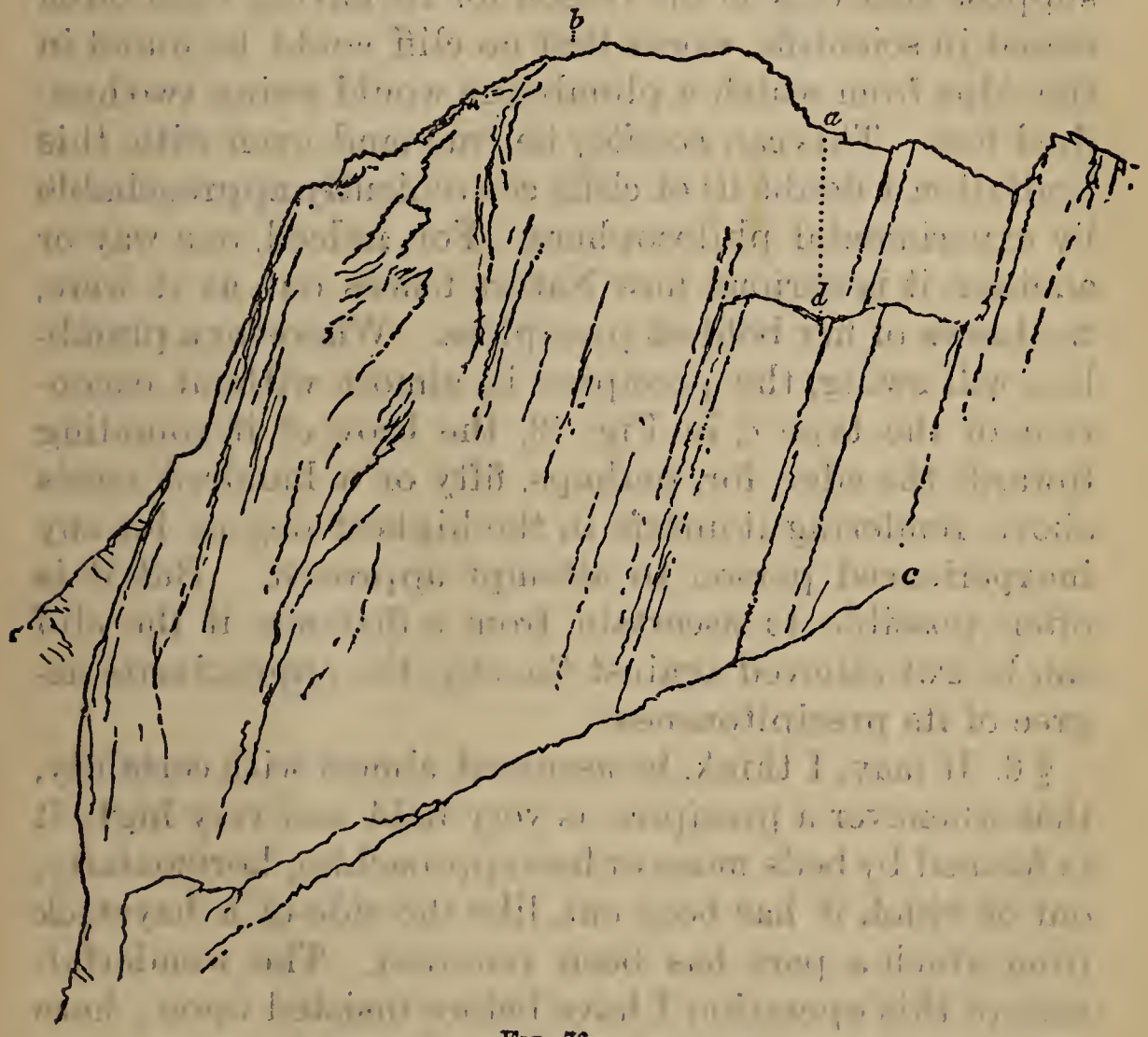


Fig. 76.

measured is *a d*; but the precipice recedes to the summit *b*, on which a human figure is discernible to the naked eye merely as a point. The bank from which the cliff rises, *c*, *recedes* as it falls to the left; so that five hundred feet may perhaps be an under-estimate of the height below the summit. The straight sloping lines are cleavages, across the beds. Finally, Fig. 4, Plate 25, gives the look of the whole summit as seen from the village of Chamouni beneath it, at a distance of about two miles, and some four or five thousand feet above the spectator. It appears, then, like a not very formidable projection of crag overhanging the great slopes of the mountain's foundation.

looks a mere step on the huge slope of the Breven; and it only deserves mention among Alpine cliffs as one of singular beauty and decision, yet perfectly approachable and examinable even by the worst climbers; which is very rarely the case with cliffs of the same boldness. I suppose that this is the reason for its having been often stated in scientific works that no cliff could be found in the Alps from which a plumb-line would swing two hundred feet. This can *possibly* be true (and even with this limitation I doubt it) of cliffs conveniently approachable by experimental philosophers. For, indeed, one way or another, it is curious how Nature fences out, as it were, the brows of her boldest precipices. Wherever a plumb-line will swing, the precipice is, almost without exception, of the type *c*, in Fig. 73, the brow of it rounding towards the edge for, perhaps, fifty or a hundred yards above, rendering it unsafe in the highest degree for any inexperienced person to attempt approach. But it is often possible to ascertain from a distance, if the cliff can be got relieved against the sky, the approximate degree of its precipitousness.

§ 6. It may, I think, be assumed, almost with certainty, that whenever a precipice is very bold and very high, it is formed by beds more or less approaching horizontally, out of which it has been cut, like the side of a haystack from which a part has been removed. The wonderfulness of this operation I have before insisted upon; here we have to examine the best examples of it.

As, in forms of central rock, the Aiguilles of Chamouni, so in notableness of lateral precipice, the Matterhorn, or Mont Cervin, stands, on the whole, unrivalled among the Alps, being terminated, on two of its sides, by precipices which produce on the imagination nearly the effect of verticality. There is, however, only one point at which they reach anything approaching such a condition; and that point is wholly inaccessible either from below or

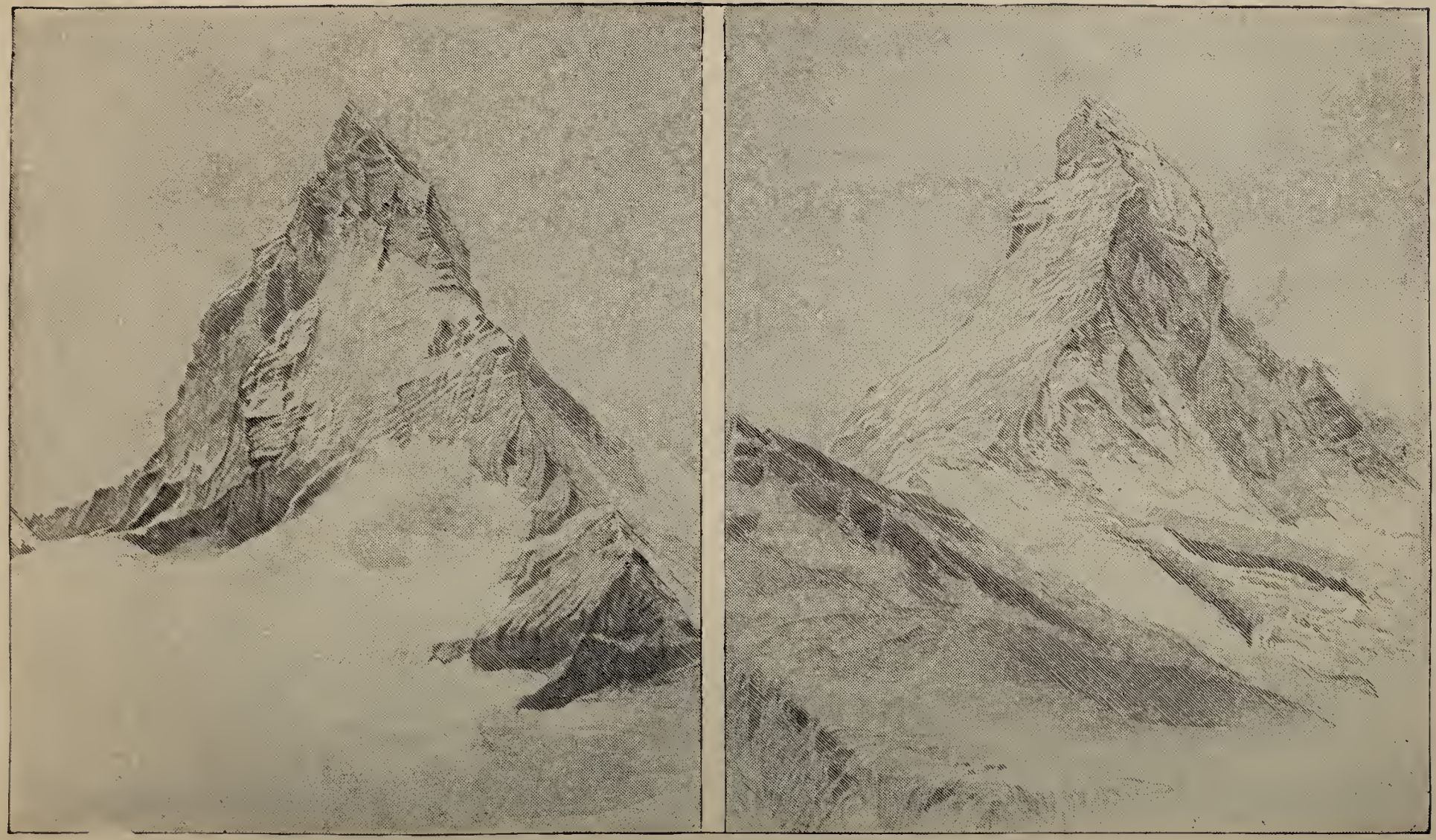


PLATE XXXVIII.—THE CERVIN, FROM THE EAST AND NORTHEAST.

above, but sufficiently measurable by a series of observations.

§ 7. From the slope of the hill above, and to the west of, the village of Zermatt, the Matterhorn presents itself under the figure shown on the right hand in the opposite plate (38). The whole height of the mass, from the glacier out of which it rises, is about 4,000 feet; and although, as before noticed, the first slope from the top towards the right is merely a perspective line, the part of the contour *c d*, Fig. 33, p. 232, which literally overhangs,* cannot be. An apparent slope, however steep, so that it does not overpass the vertical, *may* be a horizontal line; but the moment it can be shown literally to overhang, it *must* be one of two things,—either an actually pendant *face* of rock, as at *a*, Fig. 77, or the under edge of an overhanging *cornice* of rock, *b*. Of course, the latter condition, on such a scale as this of the Matterhorn, would be the more wonderful of the two; but I was anxious to determine which of these it really was.

FIG. 77.

§ 8. My first object was to reach some spot commanding, as nearly as might be, the lateral profile of the Mont Cervin. The most available point for this purpose was the top of the Riffelhorn; which, however, first attempting to climb by its deceitful western side, and being stopped, for the moment, by the singular moat and wall which defend its Malakoff-like summit, fearing that I might not be able ultimately to reach the top, I made the drawing of the Cervin, on the left hand in Plate 38,

* At an angle of 79° with the horizon. See the Table of angles, p. 232. The line *a e* in Fig. 33, is too steep, as well as in the plate here; but the other slopes are approximately accurate. I would have made them quite so, but did not like to alter the sketch made on the spot.

from the edge of the moat; and found afterwards the difference in aspect, as it was seen from the true summit, so slight as not to necessitate the trouble of making another drawing.*

§ 9. It may be noted in passing, that this wall which with its regular fosse defends the Riffelhorn on its western side, and a similar one on its eastern side, though neither of them of any considerable height, are curious instances of trenchant precipice, formed, I suppose, by slight slips or faults of the serpentine rock. The summit of the horn, *a*, Fig. 78, seems to have been pushed up in a mass beyond the rest of the ridge, or else the rest of the ridge to have dropped from it on each side at *b c*, leaving the two troublesome faces of cliff right across the crag, hard, green as a sea wave, and polished like the inside of a sea-shell, where the weather has not effaced the surface produced by the slip. It is only by getting past the eastern cliff that the summit can be reached at all, for on its two lateral escarpments the

FIG. 78.

* Professor Forbes gives the bearing of the Cervin from the top of the Riffelhorn as 351°, or N. 9° W., supposing local attraction to have caused an error of 65° to the northward, which would make the true bearing N. 74° W. From the point just under the Riffelhorn summit, *e*, in Fig. 78, at which my drawing was made, I found the Cervin bear N. 79° W. without any allowance for attraction; the disturbing influence would seem, therefore, confined, or nearly so, to the summit *a*. I did not know at the time that there was any such influence traceable, and took no bearing from the summit. For the rest, I cannot vouch for bearings as I can for angles, as their accuracy was of no

mountain seems quite inaccessible, being in its whole mass nothing else than the top of a narrow wall with a raised battlement, as rudely shown in perspective at *e d;* the flanks of the wall falling towards the glacier on one side, and to the lower Riffel on the other, four or five hundred feet, not, indeed, in unbroken precipice, but in a form quite incapable of being scaled.*

§ 10. To return to the Cervin. The view of it given on the left hand in Plate 38 shows the ridge in about its narrowest profile; and shows also that this ridge is composed of beds of rock shelving across it, apparently horizontal, or nearly so, at the top, and sloping considerably southwards (to the spectator's left), at the bottom. How far this slope is a consequence of the advance of the nearest angle giving a steep perspective to the beds, I cannot say; my own belief would have been that a great deal of it is thus deceptive, the beds lying as the tiles do in the somewhat anomalous but perfectly conceivable house-roof, Fig. 79. Saussure, however, attributes to the beds themselves a very considerable slope. But be this as it may, the main facts of the thinness of

Fig. 79.

importance to my work, and I merely noted them with a common pocket compass and in the sailor's way (s. by w. and ½ w. &c.), which involves the probability of error of from two to three degrees on either side of the true bearing. The other drawing in Plate 38 was made from a point only a degree or two to the westward of the village of Zermatt. I have no note of the bearing; but it must be about s. 60° or 65° w.

* Independent travellers may perhaps be glad to know the way to the top of the Riffelhorn. I believe there is only one path; which ascends (from the ridge of the Riffel), on its eastern slope, until, near

the beds, their comparative horizontality, and the daring sword-sweep by which the whole mountain has been hewn out of them, are from this spot comprehensible at a glance. Visible, I *should* have said; but eternally, and to the uttermost, *in*comprehensible. Every geologist who speaks of this mountain seems to be struck by the wonderfulness of its calm sculpture—the absence of all aspect of convulsion, and yet the stern chiselling of so vast a mass into its precipitous isolation, leaving no ruin nor débris near it. "Quelle force n'a-t-il fallu," exclaims M. Saussure, "pour rompre, et pour *balayer* tout ce qui manque à cette pyramide!" "What an overturn of all ancient ideas in Geology," says Professor Forbes, "to find a pinnacle of 15,000 feet high [above the sea] sharp as a pyramid, and with perpendicular precipices of thousands of feet on every hand, to be a representative of the older chalk formation; and what a difficulty to conceive the nature of a convulsion (even with unlimited power), which could produce a configuration like the Mont Cervin rising from the glacier of Zmutt!"

§ 11. The term "perpendicular" is of course applied by the Professor in the "poetical" temper of Reynolds,—that is to say, in one "inattentive to minute exactness in details;" but the effect of this strange Matterhorn upon the imagination is indeed so great, that even the gravest philosophers cannot resist it; and Professor Forbes's drawing of the peak, outlined at page 230, has evidently been made under the influence of considerable excitement. For fear of being deceived by enthusiasm

the summit, the low but perfectly smooth cliff, extending from side to side of the ridge, seems, as on the western slope, to bar all farther advance. This cliff may, however, by a good climber, be mastered even at the southern extremity; but it is dangerous there: at the opposite or northern side of it, just at its base, is a little cornice, about a foot broad, which does not look promising at first, but widens presently; and when once it is past, there is no more difficulty in reaching the summit.

also, I daguerreotyped the Cervin from the edge of the little lake under the crag of the Riffelhorn, with the somewhat amazing result shown in Fig. 80. So cautious is Nature, even in her boldest work, so broadly does she extend the foundations, and strengthen the buttresses, of masses which produce so striking an *impression* as to be described, even by the most careful writers, as perpendicular.

FIG. 80.

§ 12. The only portion of the Matterhorn which approaches such a condition is the shoulder, before alluded to, forming a step of about one-twelfth the height of the whole peak, shown by light on its snowy side, or upper surface in the right-hand figure of Plate 38. Allowing 4,000 feet for the height of the peak, this step or shoulder will be between 300 and 400 feet in absolute height; and as it is not only perpendicular, but assuredly overhangs, both at this snow-lighted angle and at the other corner of the mountain (seen against the sky in the same figure), I have not the slightest doubt that a plumb-line would swing from the brow of either of these bastions, between 600 and 800 feet, without touching rock. The intermediate portion of the cliff which joins them is, however, not more than vertical. I was therefore anxious chiefly to observe the structure of the two angles, and, to that end, to see the mountain close on that side, from the Zmutt glacier.

§ 13. I am afraid my dislike to the nomenclatures invented by the German philosophers has been unreasonably, though involuntarily, complicated with that which, crossing out of Italy, one necessarily feels for those invented by the German peasantry. As travellers now every day more frequently visit the neighborhood of

the Monte Rosa, it would surely be a permissible, because convenient, poetical license, to invent some other name for this noble glacier, whose present title, certainly not euphonious, has the additional disadvantage of being easily confounded with that of the *Zermatt* glacier, properly so called. I mean myself, henceforward, to call it the Red glacier, because, for two or three miles above its lower extremity, the whole surface of it is covered with blocks of reddish gneiss, or other slaty crystalline rocks,—some fallen from the Cervin, some from the Weisshorn, some brought from the Stockhi and Dent d'Erin, but little rolled or ground down in the transit, and covering the ice, often four or five feet deep, with a species of macadamization on a large scale (each stone being usually some foot or foot and a half in diameter), anything but convenient to a traveller in haste. Higher up, the ice opens into broad white fields and furrows, hard and dry, scarcely fissured at all, except just under the Cervin, and forming a silent and solemn causeway, paved, as it seems, with white marble from side to side; broad enough for the march of an army in line of battle, but quiet as a street of tombs in a buried city, and bordered on each hand by ghostly cliffs of that faint granite purple which seems, in its far-away height, as unsubstantial as the dark blue that bounds it;—the whole scene so changeless and soundless; so removed, not merely from the presence of men, but even from their thoughts; so destitute of all life of tree or herb, and so immeasurable in its lonely brightness of majestic death, that it looks like a world from which not only the human, but the spiritual, presences had perished, and the last of its archangels, building the great mountains for their monuments, had laid themselves down in the sunlight to an eternal rest, each in his white shroud.

§ 14. The first point from which the Matterhorn precipices, which I came to examine, show their structure

PLATE XXXIX.—THE CERVIN, FROM THE NORTHWEST.

distinctly, is about half-way up the valley, before reaching the glacier. The most convenient path, and access to the ice, are on the south; but it is best, in order to watch the changes of the Matterhorn, to keep on the north side of the valley; and, at the point just named, the shoulder marked *e* in Fig. 33, p. 232, is seen, in the morning sunlight, to be composed of zigzag beds, apparently of eddied sand. (Fig. 81.)

Fig. 81.

I have no doubt they once *were* eddied sand; that is to say, sea or torrent drift, hardened by fire into crystalline rock; but whether they ever were or not, the certain fact is, that here we have a precipice, trenchant, overhanging, and 500 feet in height, cut across the thin beds which compose it as smoothly as a piece of fine-grained wood is cut with a chisel.

§ 15. From this point, also, the nature of the corresponding bastion, *c d*, Fig. 33, is also discernible. It is the edge of a great concave precipice, cut out of the mountain, as the smooth hollows are out of the rocks at the foot of a waterfall, and across which the variously colored beds, thrown by perspective into corresponding curvatures, run exactly like the seams of canvas in a Venetian felucca's sail.

Seen from this spot, it seems impossible that the mountain should long support itself in such a form, but the impression is only caused by the concealment of the vast proportions of the mass behind, whose poise is quite unaffected by this hollowing at one point. Thenceforward, as we ascend the glacier, the Matterhorn every moment expands in apparent width; and having reached the foot of the Stockhi (about a four hours' walk from Zermatt), and getting the Cervin summit to bear S. 11½° E., I made the drawing of it engraved opposite, which gives

a true idea of the relations between it and the masses of its foundation. The bearing stated is that of the apparent summit only, as from this point the true summit is not visible; the rocks which seem to form the greatest part of the mountain being in reality nothing but its foundations, while the little white jagged peak, relieved against the dark hollow just below the seeming summit, is the rock marked *g* in Fig. 33. But the structure of the mass, and the long ranges of horizontal, or nearly horizontal, beds which form its crest, showing in black points like arrow-heads through the snow, where their ridges are left projecting by the avalanche channels, are better seen than at any other point I reached, together with the sweeping and thin zones of sandy gneiss below, bending apparently like a coach-spring; and the notable point about the whole is, that this under-bed, of seemingly the most delicate substance, is that prepared by Nature to build her boldest precipice with, it being this bed which emerges at the two bastions or shoulders before noticed, and which by that projection causes the strange oblique distortion of the whole mountain mass, as it is seen from Zermatt.

§ 16. And our surprise will still be increased as we farther examine the materials of which the whole mountain is composed. In many places its crystalline slates, where their horizontal surfaces are exposed along the projecting beds of their foundations, break into ruin so total that the foot dashes through their loose red flakes as through heaps of autumn leaves; and yet, just where their structure seems most delicate, just where they seem to have been swept before the eddies of the streams that first accumulated them, in the most passive whirls, there the after-ages have knit them into the most massive strength, and there have hewn out of them those firm gray bastions of the Cervin,—overhanging, smooth, flawless, unconquerable! For, unlike the Chamouni aiguilles, there

is no aspect of destruction about the Matterhorn cliffs. They are not torn remnants of separating spires, yielding flake by flake, and band by band, to the continual process of decay. They are, on the contrary, an unaltered monument, seemingly sculptured long ago, the huge walls retaining yet the forms into which they were first engraven, and standing like an Egyptian temple,—delicate-fronted, softly colored, the suns of uncounted ages rising and falling upon it continually, but still casting the same line of shadows from east to west, still, century after century, touching the same purple stains on the lotus pillars; while the desert sand ebbs and flows about their feet, as those autumn leaves of rock lie heaped and weak about the base of the Cervin.

§ 17. Is not this a strange type, in the very heart and height of these mysterious Alps—these wrinkled hills in their snowy, cold, gray-haired old age, at first so silent, then, as we keep quiet at their feet, muttering and whispering to us garrulously, in broken and dreaming fits, as it were, about their childhood—is it not a strange type of the things which "out of weakness are made strong?" If one of those little flakes of mica-sand, hurried in tremulous spangling along the bottom of the ancient river, too light to sink, too faint to float, almost too small for sight, could have had a mind given to it as it was at last borne down with its kindred dust into the abysses of the stream, and laid, (would it not have thought?) for a hopeless eternity, in the dark ooze, the most despised, forgotten, and feeble of all earth's atoms; incapable of any use or change; not fit, down there in the diluvial darkness, so much as to help an earth-wasp to build its nest, or feed the first fibre of a lichen;—what would it have thought, had it been told that one day, knitted into a strength as of imperishable iron, rustless by the air, infusible by the flame, out of the substance of it, with its fellows, the axe of God

should hew that Alpine tower; that against *it*—poor, helpless, mica flake!—the wild north winds should rage in vain; beneath *it*—low-fallen mica flake!—the snowy hills should lie bowed like flocks of sheep, and the kingdoms of the earth fade away in unregarded blue; and around it—weak, wave-drifted mica flake!—the great war of the firmament should burst in thunder, and yet stir it not; and the fiery arrows and angry meteors of the night fall blunted back from it into the air; and all the stars in the clear heaven should light, one by one as they rose, new cressets upon the points of snow that fringed its abiding-place on the imperishable spire?

§ 18. I have thought it worth while, for the sake of these lessons, and the other interests connected with them, to lead the reader thus far into the examination of the principal precipices among the Alps, although, so far as our immediate purposes are concerned, the inquiry cannot be very fruitful or helpful to us. For rocks of this kind, being found only in the midst of the higher snow fields, are not only out of the general track of the landscape painter, but are for the most part quite beyond his power—even beyond Turner's. The waves of snow, when it becomes a principal element in mountain form, are at once so subtle in tone, and so complicated in curve and fold, that no skill will express them, so as to keep the whole luminous mass in anything like a true relation to the rock darkness. For the distant rocks of the upper peaks are themselves, when in light, paler than white paper, and their true size and relation to near objects cannot be exhibited unless they are painted in the palest tones. Yet, as compared with their snow, they are so dark that a daguerreotype taken for the proper number of seconds to draw the snow shadows rightly, will always represent the rocks as *coal-black*. In order, therefore, to paint a snowy mountain properly, we should need a light as much brighter than

white paper as white paper is brighter than charcoal. So that although it is possible, with deep-blue sky, and purple rocks, and blue shadows, to obtain a very interesting resemblance of snow effect, and a true one up to a certain point (as in the best examples of the body-color drawings sold so extensively in Switzerland), it is not possible to obtain any of those refinements of form and gradation which a great artist's eye requires. Turner felt that, among these highest hills, no serious or perfect work could be done; and although in one or two of his vignettes (already referred to in the first volume) he showed his knowledge of them, his practice, in larger works, was always to treat the snowy mountains merely as a far-away white cloud, concentrating the interest of his picture on nearer and more tractable objects.

§ 19. One circumstance, however, bearing upon art, we may note before leaving these upper precipices, namely, the way in which they illustrate the favorite expression of Homer and Dante—*cut* rocks. However little satisfied we had reason to be with the degree of affection shown towards mountain scenery by either poet, we may now perceive, with some respect and surprise, that they had got at one character which was in the essence of the noblest rocks, just as the early illuminators got at the principles which lie at the heart of vegetation. As distinguished from all other natural forms,—from fibres which are torn, crystals which are broken, stones which are rounded or worn, animal and vegetable forms which are grown or moulded,— the true hard rock or precipice is notably a thing *cut*, its inner *grain* or structure seeming to have less to do with its form than is seen in any other object or substance whatsoever; and the aspect of subjection to some external sculpturing instrument being distinct in almost exact proportion to the size and stability of the mass.

§ 20. It is not so, however, with the next groups of

mountain which we have to examine—those formed by the softer slaty coherents, when their perishable and frail substance has been raised into cliffs in the manner illustrated by Fig. 12 at p. 190,—cliffs whose front every frost disorganizes into filmy shale, and of which every thunder-shower dissolves tons in the swoln blackness of torrents. If this takes place from the top downwards, the cliff is gradually effaced, and a more or less rounded eminence is soon all that remains of it; but if the lower beds only decompose, or if the whole structure is strengthened here and there by courses of harder rock, the precipice is undermined, and remains hanging in perilous ledges and projections until, the process having reached the limit of its strength, vast portions of it fall at once, leaving new fronts of equal ruggedness, to be ruined and cast down in their turn.

The whole district of the northern inferior Alps, from the mountains of the Reposoir to the Gemmi, is full of precipices of this kind; the well-known crests of the Mont Doron, and of the Aiguille de Varens, above Sallenches, being connected by the great cliffs of the valley of Sixt, the dark mass of the Buet, the Dent du Midi de Bex, and the Diablerets, with the great amphitheatre of rock in whose securest recess the path of the Gemmi hides its winding. But the most frightful and most characteristic cliff in the whole group is the range of the Rochers des Fys, above the Col d'Anterne. It happens to have a bed of harder limestone at the top than in any other part of its mass; and this bed, protecting its summit, enables it to form itself into the most ghastly ranges of pinnacle which I know among mountains. In one spot the upper edge of limestone has formed a complete cornice, or rather bracket—for it is not extended enough to constitute a cornice, which projects far into the air over the wall of ashy rock, and is seen against the clouds, when they pass into the chasm beyond, like

the nodding coping-stone of a castle—only the wall below is not less than 2,500 feet in height,—not vertical, but steep enough to seem so to the imagination.

§ 21. Such precipices are among the most impressive as well as the most really dangerous of mountain ranges; in many spots inaccessible with safety either from below or from above; dark in color, robed with everlasting mourning, for ever tottering like a great fortress shaken by war, fearful as much in their weakness as in their strength, and yet gathered after every fall into darker frowns and unhumiliated threatening; for ever incapable of comfort or of healing from herb or flower, nourishing no root in their crevices, touched by no hue of life on buttress or ledge, but, to the utmost, desolate; knowing no shaking of leaves in the wind, nor of grass beside the stream,—no motion but their own mortal shivering, the deathful crumbling of atom from atom in their corrupting stones; knowing no sound of living voice or living tread, cheered neither by the kid's bleat nor the marmot's cry; haunted only by uninterrupted echoes from far off, wandering hither and thither among their walls, unable to escape, and by the hiss of angry torrents, and sometimes the shriek of a bird that flits near the face of them, and sweeps frightened back from under their shadow into the gulf of air: and, sometimes, when the echo has fainted, and the wind has carried the sound of the torrent away, and the bird has vanished, and the mouldering stones are still for a little time,—a brown moth, opening and shutting its wings upon a grain of dust, may be the only thing that moves, or feels, in all the waste of weary precipice, darkening five thousand feet of the blue depth of heaven.

§ 22. It will not be thought that there is nothing in a scene such as this deserving our contemplation, or capable of conveying useful lessons, if it were fitly rendered by art. I cannot myself conceive any picture more im-

pressive than a faithful rendering of such a cliff would be, supposing the aim of the artist to be the utmost tone of sad sublime. I am, nevertheless, aware of no instance in which the slightest attempt has been made to express their character; the reason being, partly, the extreme difficulty of the task, partly the want of temptation in specious color or form. For the majesty of this kind of cliff depends entirely on its size: a low range of such rock is as uninteresting as it is ugly; and it is only by making the spectator understand the enormous scale of their desolation, and the space which the shadow of their danger oppresses, that any impression can be made upon his mind. And this scale cannot be expressed by any artifice; the mountain cannot be made to look large by painting it blue or faint, otherwise it loses all its ghastliness. It must be painted in its own near and solemn colors, black and ashen-gray; and its size must be expressed by thorough drawing of its innumerable details—pure *quantity*,—with certain points of comparison explanatory of the whole. This is no light task; and attempted by any man of ordinary genius, would need steady and careful painting for three or four months; while, to such a man, there would appear to be nothing worth his toil in the gloom of the subject, unrelieved as it is even by variety of form; for the soft rock of which these cliffs are composed rarely breaks into bold masses; and the gloom of their effect partly depends on its not doing so.

§ 23. Yet, while painters thus reject the natural, and large sublime, which is ready to their hand, how strangely do they seek after a false and small sublime. It is not that they reprobate gloom, but they will only have a gloom of their own making; just as half the world will not see the terrible and sad truths which the universe is full of, but surrounds itself with little clouds of sulky and unnecessary fog for its own special breathing. A

portrait is not thought grand unless it has a thunder-cloud behind it (as if a hero could not be brave in sunshine); a ruin is not melancholy enough till it is seen by moonlight or twilight; and every condition of theatrical pensiveness or of the theatrical terrific is exhausted in setting forth scenes or persons which in themselves are, perhaps, very quiet scenes and homely persons; while that which, without any accessories at all, is everlastingly melancholy and terrific, we refuse to paint,—nay, we refuse even to observe it in its reality, while we seek for the excitement of the very feelings it was meant to address, in every conceivable form of our false ideal.

For instance: there have been few pictures more praised for their sublimity than the "Deluge" of Nicolas Poussin: of which, nevertheless, the sublimity, such as it is, consists wholly in the painting of everything gray or brown,—not the gray and brown of great painters, full of mysterious and unconfessed colors, dim blue, and shadowy purple, and veiled gold,—but the stony gray and dismal brown of the conventionalist. Madame de Genlis, whose general criticisms on painting are full of good sense—singularly so, considering the age in which she lived*—has the following passage on this picture:—

"'I remember to have seen the painting you mention; but I own I found nothing in it very beautiful.'

"'You have seen it rain often enough?'

"'Certainly.'

"'Have you ever at such times observed the color of the clouds attentively?—how the dusky atmosphere obscures all objects, makes them, if distant, disappear, or

* I ought before to have mentioned Madame de Genlis as one of the few writers whose influence was always exerted to restore to truthful feelings, and persuade to simple enjoyments and pursuits, the persons accessible to reason in the frivolous world of her times.

to be seen with difficulty? Had you paid proper attention to these effects of rain, you would have been amazed by the exactitude with which they are painted by Poussin.'"*

§ 24. Madame de Genlis is just in her appeal to nature, but had not herself looked carefully enough to make her appeal accurate. She had noticed one of the principal effects of rain, but not the other. It is true that the dusky atmosphere "obscures all objects," but it is also true that Nature, never intending the eye of man to be without delight, has provided a rich compensation for this shading of the tints with *darkness*, in their brightening by *moisture*. Every color, wet, is twice as brilliant as it is when dry; and when distances are obscured by mist, and bright colors vanish from the sky, and gleams of sunshine from the earth, the foreground assumes all its loveliest hues, the grass and foliage revive into their perfect green, and every sunburnt rock glows into an agate. The colors of mountain foregrounds can never be seen in perfection unless they *are* wet; nor *can moisture be entirely expressed except by fulness of color*. So that Poussin, in search of a false sublimity, painting every object in his picture, vegetation and all, of one dull gray and brown, has actually rendered it impossible for an educated eye to conceive it as representing rain at all; it is a dry, volcanic darkness. It may be said that, had he painted the effect of rain truly, the picture, composed of the objects he has introduced, would have become too pretty for his purpose. But his error, and the error of landscapists in general, is in seeking to express terror by false treatment, instead of going to Nature herself to ask her what she has appointed to be everlastingly terrible. The greatest genius would be shown by taking the scene in its plainest and most probable facts; not seeking to change pity

* Veillées du Château, vol. ii.

into fear, by denying the beauty of the world that was passing away. But if it were determined to excite fear, and fear only, it ought to have been done by imagining the true ghastliness of the tottering cliffs of Ararat or Caucasus, as the heavy waves first smote against the promontories that until then had only known the thin fanning of the upper air of heaven; not by painting leaves and grass slate-gray. And a new world of sublimity might be opened to us, if any painter of power and feeling would devote himself, for a few months, to these solemn cliffs of the dark limestone Alps, and would only paint one of them, as it truly stands, not in rain nor storm, but in its own eternal sadness: perhaps best on some fair summer evening, when its fearful veil of immeasurable rock is breathed upon by warm air, and touched with fading rays of purple; and all that it has of the melancholy of ruin, mingled with the might of endurance, and the foreboding of danger, rises in its gray gloom against the gentle sky; the soft wreaths of the evening clouds expiring along its ridges one by one, and leaving it, at last, with no light but that of its own cascades, standing like white pillars here and there along its sides, motionless and soundless in their distance.

§ 25. Here, however, we must leave these more formidable examples of the Alpine precipice, to examine those which, by Turner or by artists in general, have been regarded as properly within the sphere of their art.

Turner had in this respect some peculiar views induced by early association. It has already been noticed, in my pamphlet on Pre-Raphaelitism, that his first conceptions of mountain scenery seem to have been taken from Yorkshire; and its rounded hills, far winding rivers, and broken limestone scars, to have formed a type in his mind to which he sought, as far as might be, to obtain some correspondent imagery in all other land-

scape. Hence, he almost always preferred to have a precipice *low down* on the hillside, rather than near the top; liked an extent of rounded slope above, and the vertical cliff to the water or valley, better than the slope at the bottom and wall at the top (compare Fig. 13, p. 192); and had his attention early directed to those horizontal, or comparatively horizontal, beds of rock which usually form the faces of precipices in the Yorkshire dales; not, as in the Matterhorn, merely indicated by veined coloring on the surface of the smooth cliff, but projecting, or mouldering away, in definite successions of ledges, cornices, or steps.

§ 26. This decided love of the slope, or bank above the wall, rather than below it, is one of Turner's most marked idiosyncrasies, and gives a character to his composition, as distinguished from that of other men, perhaps more marked than any which are traceable in other features of it (except, perhaps, in his pear-shaped ideal of trees, of which more hereafter). For when mountains are striking to the general eye, they almost always have the high crest or wall of cliff on the *top* of their slopes, rising from the plain first in mounds of meadow-land, and bosses of rock, and studded softness of forest; the brown cottages peeping through grove above grove, until just where the deep shade of the pines becomes blue or purple in the haze of height, a red wall of upper precipice rises from the pasture land, and frets the sky with glowing serration. Plate 40, opposite, represents a mass of mountain just above Villeneuve, at the head of the Lake of Geneva, in which the type of the structure is shown with singular clearness. Much of the scenery of western Switzerland, and characteristically the whole of that of Savoy, is composed of mountains of this kind; the isolated group between Chambéry and Grenoble, which holds the Grande Chartreuse in the heart of it, is constructed entirely of such

PLATE XL.—THE MOUNTAINS OF VILLENEUVE.

masses; and the Montagne de Vergi, which in like manner encloses the narrow meadows and traceried cloisters of the Convent of the Reposoir, forms the most striking feature among all the mountains that border the valley of the Arve between Cluse and Geneva; while ranges of cliffs presenting precisely the same typical characters frown above the bridge and fortress of Mont-Meillan, and enclose, in light blue calm, the waters of the Lake of Annecy.

§ 27. Now, although in many of his drawings Turner acknowledges this structure, it seems always to be with some degree of reluctance; whereas he seizes with instant eagerness, and every appearance of contentment,

FIG. 82.

on forms of mountain which are rounded into banks above, and cut into precipices below, as is the case in most elevated table-lands; in the chalk côteaux of the Seine, the basalt borders of the Rhine, and the lower gorges of the Alps; so that while the most striking pieces of natural mountain scenery usually rise from the plain under some such outline as that at *a*, Fig. 82, Turner always formed his composition, if possible, on such an arrangement as that at *b*.

One reason for this is clearly the greater simplicity of the line. The simpler a line is, so that it be cunningly varied *within* its simplicities, the grander it is; and Turner likes to enclose all his broken crags by such a line as that at *b*, just as we saw the classical composer, in our first plate, enclose the griffin's beak with breadth of wing. Nevertheless, I cannot but attribute his some-

what wilful and marked rejection of what sublimity there is in the other form, to the influence of early affections; and sincerely regret that the fascination exercised over him by memory should have led him to pass so much of his life in putting a sublimity not properly belonging to them into the côteaux of Clairmont and Meauves, and the vine terraces of Bingen and Oberwesel; leaving almost unrecorded the natural sublimity, which he could never have exaggerated, of the pine-fringed mountains of the Isère, and the cloudy diadem of the Mont Vergi.

§ 28. In all cases of this kind, it is difficult to say how far harm and how far good have resulted from what unquestionably has in it something of both. It is to be regretted that Turner's studies should have been warped, by early affection, from the Alps to the Rhine; but the fact of his *feeling* this early affection, and being thus strongly influenced by it through his life, is indicative of that sensibility which was at the root of all his greatness. Other artists are led away by foreign sublimities and distant interests; delighting always in that which is most markedly strange, and quaintly contrary to the scenery of their homes. But Turner evidently felt that the claims upon his regard possessed by those places which first had opened to him the joy, and the labor, of his life, could never be superseded; no Alpine cloud could efface, no Italian sunbeam outshine, the memory of the pleasant dales and days of Rokeby and Bolton; and many a simple promontory, dim with southern olive, —many a low cliff that stooped unnoticed over some alien wave, was recorded by him with a love, and delicate care, that were the shadows of old thoughts and long-lost delights, whose charm yet hung like morning mist above the chanting waves of Wharfe and Greta.

§ 29. The first instance, therefore, of Turner's mountain drawing which I endeavored to give accurately, in

this book, was from those shores of Wharfe which, I believe, he never could revisit without tears; nay, which for all the latter part of his life, he never could even speak of, but his voice faltered. We will now examine this instance with greater care.

It is first to be remembered that in every one of his English or French drawings, Turner's mind was, in two great instincts, at variance with itself. The *affections* of it clung, as we have just seen, to humble scenery, and gentle wildness of pastoral life. But the *admiration* of it was, more than any other artist's whatsoever, fastened on largeness of scale. With all his heart, he was attached to the narrow meadows and rounded knolls of England; by all his imagination he was urged to the reverence of endless vales and measureless hills; nor could any scene be too contracted for his love, or too vast for his ambition. Hence, when he returned to English scenery after his first studies in Savoy and Dauphiné, he was continually endeavoring to reconcile old fondnesses with new sublimities; and, as in Switzerland he chose rounded Alps for the love of Yorkshire, so in Yorkshire he exaggerated scale, in memory of Switzerland, and gave to Ingleborough, seen from Hornby Castle, in great part the expression of cloudy majesty and height which he had seen in the Alps from Grenoble. We must continually remember these two opposite instincts as we examine the Turnerian topography of his subject of Bolton Abbey.

§ 30. The Abbey is placed, as most lovers of our English scenery know well, on a little promontory of level park land, enclosed by one of the sweeps of the Wharfe. On the other side of the river, the flank of the dale rises in a pretty wooded brow, which the river, leaning against, has cut into two or three somewhat bold masses of rock, steep to the water's edge, but feathered above with copse of ash and oak. Above these rocks, the hills are rounded

softly upwards to the moorland; the entire height of the brow towards the river being perhaps two hundred feet, and the rocky parts of it not above forty or fifty, so that the general impression upon the eye is that the hill is little more than twice the height of the ruins, or of the groups of noble ash-trees which encircle them. One of these groups is conspicuous above the rest, growing on the very shore of the tongue of land which projects into the river, whose clear brown water, stealing first in mere threads between the separate pebbles of shingle, and eddying in soft golden lines towards its central currents, flows out of amber into ebony, and glides calm and deep below the rock on the opposite shore.

§ 31. Except in this stony bed of the stream, the scene possesses very little more aspect of mountain character than belongs to some of the park and meadow land under the chalk hills near Henley and Maidenhead; and if it were faithfully drawn in all points, and on its true scale, would hardly more affect the imagination of the spectator, unless he traced, with such care as is never from any spectator to be hoped, the evidence of nobler character in the pebbled shore and unconspicuous rock. But the scene in reality does affect the imagination strongly, and in a way wholly different from lowland hill scenery. A little farther up the valley the limestone summits rise, and that steeply, to a height of twelve hundred feet above the river, which foams between them in the narrow and dangerous channel of the Strid. Noble moorlands extend above, purple with heath, and broken into scars and glens, and around every soft tuft of wood, and gentle extent of meadow, throughout the dale, there floats a feeling of this mountain power, and an instinctive apprehension of the strength and greatness of the wild northern land.

§ 32. It is to the association of this power and border sternness with the sweet peace and tender decay of Bol-

ton Priory, that the scene owes its distinctive charm. The feelings excited by both characters are definitely connected by the melancholy tradition of the circumstances to which the Abbey owes its origin; and yet farther darkened by the nearer memory of the death, in the same spot which betrayed the boy of Egremont, of another, as young, as thoughtless, and as beloved.

> "The stately priory was reared,
> And Wharfe, as he moved along,
> To matins joined a mournful voice,
> Nor failed at evensong."

All this association of various awe, and noble mingling of mountain strength with religious fear, Turner had to suggest, or he would not have drawn Bolton Abbey. He goes down to the shingly shore; for the Abbey is but the child of the Wharfe;—it is the river, the great cause of the Abbey, which shall be his main subject; only the extremity of the ruin itself is seen between the stems of the ash-tree; but the waves of the Wharfe are studied with a care which renders this drawing unique among Turner's works, for its expression of the eddies of a slow mountain stream, and of their pausing in treacherous depth beneath the hollowed rocks.

On the opposite shore is a singular jutting angle of the shales, forming the principal feature of the low cliffs at the water's edge. Turner fastens on it as the only available mass; draws it with notable care, and then magnifies it, by diminishing the trees on its top to one-fifth of their real size, so that what would else have been little more than a stony bank becomes a true precipice, on a scale completely suggestive of the heights behind. The hill beyond is in like manner lifted into a more rounded, but still precipitous, eminence, reaching the utmost admissible elevation of ten or twelve hundred feet (measurable by the trees upon it). I have en-

graved this entire portion of the drawing of the real size, on the opposite page; the engraving of the whole drawing, published in the England Series, is also easily accessible.

§ 33. Not knowing accurately to what group of the Yorkshire limestones the rocks opposite the Abbey belonged, or their relation to the sandstones at the Strid, I wrote to ask my kind friend, Professor Phillips, who instantly sent me a little geological sketch of the position of these "Yoredale Shales," adding this interesting note: "The black shales opposite the Abbey are curiously tinted at the surface, and are contorted. Most artists give them the appearance of solid massive rocks; nor is this altogether wrong, especially when the natural joints of the shale appear prominent after particular accidents; they should, however, never be made to resemble [i.e. in solidity] limestone or gritstone."

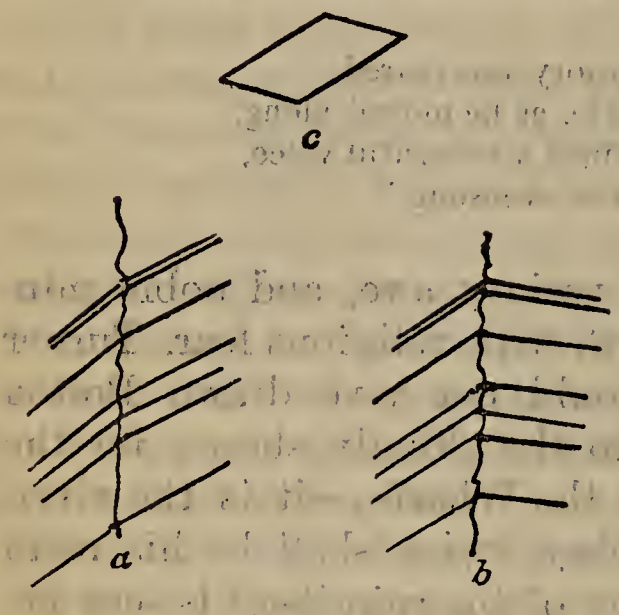


FIG. 83.

Now the Yoredale shales are members of the group of rocks which I have called slaty coherents, and correspond very closely to those portions of the Alpine slates described in Chap. x. § 4; their main character is continual separation into fine flakes, more or less of Dante's "iron-colored grain;" which, however, on a large scale, form those somewhat solid-looking masses to which Mr. Phillips alludes in his letter, and which he describes, in his recently published Geology, in the following general terms: "The shales of this tract are usually dark, close, and fissile, and traversed by extremely

PLATE XLI.—THE SHORES OF WHARFE.

long straight joints, dividing the rock into rhomboidal prisms" (i.e. prisms of the shape *c*, Fig. 83, in the section).

§ 34. Turner had, therefore, these four things to show:—1. Flaky division horizontally; 2. Division by rhomboidal joints; 3. Massy appearance occasionally, somewhat concealing the structure; 4. Local contortion of the beds. (See passage quoted of Mr. Phillips's letter.)

Fig. 84.

Examine, then, the plate just given (41). The cleavage of the shales runs diagonally up from left to right; note especially how delicately it runs up through the foreground rock, and is insisted upon, just at the brow of it, in the angular step-like fragments; compare also the etching in the first volume. Then note the upright pillars in the distance, marked especially as rhomboidal by being drawn with the cleavage still sloping up on the returning side, as at *a*, Fig. 83, not as at *b*, which would be their aspect if they were square; and then the indication of interruption in the structure at the brow of the main cliff, where, as well as on the nearer mass, exposure to the weather has rounded away the cleavages.

This projection, as before mentioned, does exist at the spot; and I believe is partly an indication of the contortion in the beds alluded to by Mr. Phillips; but no one but Turner would have fastened on it, as in anywise deserving special attention.

For the rest, no words are of any use to explain the

subtle fidelity with which the minor roundings and cleavages have been expressed by him. Fidelity of this kind can only be estimated by workers: if the reader can himself draw a bit of natural precipice in Yoredale shale, and then copy a bit of the etching, he will find some measure of the difference between Turner's work and other people's, and not otherwise; although, without any such labor, he may at once perceive that there *is* a difference, and a wide one,—so wide, that I have literally nothing to compare the Turnerian work with in previous art. Here, however, Fig. 84, is a rock of Claude's (Liber Veritatis, No. 91, on the left hand), which is something of the shape of Turner's, and professes to be crested in like manner with copse-wood. The reader may "compare" as much as he likes, or can, of it.

§ 35. In fact, as I said some time ago, the whole landscape of Claude was nothing but a more or less softened continuance of the old traditions of missal-painting, of which I gave examples in the previous volume. The general notion of rock which may be traced in the earliest work, as Figs. 1 and 2 in Plate 10, Vol. III., is of an upright mass cut out with an adze; as art advances, the painters begin to perceive horizontal stratification, and, as in all the four other examples of that plate, show something like true rendering of the fracture of rocks in vertical joints with superimposed projecting masses. They insist on this type, thinking it frowning or picturesque, and usually exhibit it to more

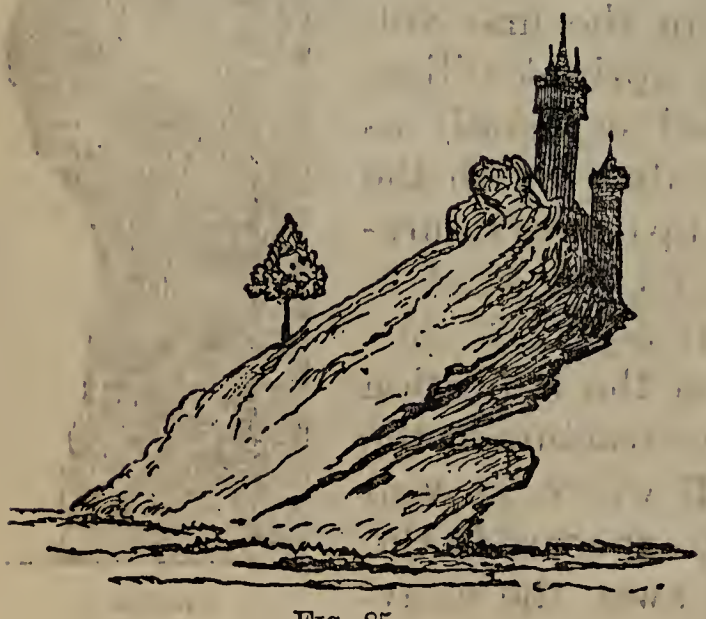


Fig. 85.

advantage by putting a convent, hermitage, or castle on the projection of the crag. In the blue backgrounds of the missals the projection is often wildly extravagant; for instance, the MS. Additional, 11,696 Brit. Mus., has all its backgrounds composed of blue rocks with towers upon them, of which Fig. 85 is a characteristic example (magnified in scale about one-third; but, I think, rather diminished in extravagance of projection). It is infinitely better drawn than Claude's rocks ever are, in the expression of cleavage; but certainly somewhat too bold in standing. Then, in more elaborate work, we get conditions of precipice like Fig. 3 in Plate 10, which, indeed, is not ill-drawn in many respects; and the book from which it is taken shows other evidences of a love of nature sufficiently rare at the period, though joined quaintly with love of the grotesque; for instance, the writer, giving an account of the natural productions of Saxony, illustrates his chapter with a view of the salt mines; he represents the brine-spring conducted by a wooden trough from the rock into an evaporating-house where it is received in a pan, under which he has painted scarlet flames of fire with singular skill; and the rock out of which the brine flows is in its general cleavages the best I ever saw drawn by mediæval art.

Fig. 86.

But it is carefully wrought to the resemblance of a grotesque human head.

§ 36. This bolder quaintness of the missals is very slightly modified in religious paintings of the period. Fig. 86, by Cima da Conegliano, a Venetian, No. 173 in the Louvre, compared with Fig. 3 of Plate 10 (Flemish), will show the kind of received tradition about rocks cur-

Fig. 87.

rent throughout Europe. Claude takes up this tradition, and merely making the rocks a little clumsier, and more weedy, produces such conditions as Fig. 87 (Liber Veritatis, No. 91, with Fig. 84 above); while the orthodox door or archway at the bottom is developed into the Homeric cave, shaded with laurels, and some ships are put underneath it, or seen through it, at impossible anchorages.

PLATE XLII.—THE ROCK OF ARONA.

§ 37. Fig. 87 is generally characteristic, not only of Claude, but of the other painters of the Renaissance period, because they were all equally fond of representing this overhanging of rocks with buildings on the top, and weeds drooping into the air over the edge, always thinking to get sublimity by exaggerating the projection, and never able to feel or understand the simplicity of real rock lines; not that they were in want of examples around them: on the contrary, though the main idea was traditional, the modifications of it are always traceable to the lower masses of limestone and tufa which skirt the Alps and Appennines, and which have, in reality, long-contracted habits of nodding over their bases; being, both by Virgil and Homer, spoken of always as "hanging" or "over-roofed" rocks. But then they have a way of doing it rather different from the Renaissance ideas of them. Here, for instance (Plate 42), is a real hanging rock, with a castle on the top of it, and (καταρεφής) laurel, all plain fact, from Arona, on the Lago Maggiore: and, I believe, the reader, though we have not as yet said anything about lines, will at once, on comparing it with Fig. 87, recognize the difference between the true parabolic flow of the rock-lines and the humpbacked deformity of Claude; and, still more, the difference between the delicate overhanging of the natural cliff, cautiously diminished as it gets higher,* and the ideal danger of the Liber Veritatis.

§ 38. And the fact is, generally, that natural cliffs are very cautious how they overhang, and that the artist who represents them as doing so in any extravagant degree entirely destroys the sublimity which he hoped to increase, for the simple reason that he takes away the whole rock-nature, or at least that part of it which de-

* The actual extent of the projection remaining the same throughout, the angle of suspended slope, for that reason, diminishes as the cliff increases in height.

pends upon weight. The instinct of the observer refuses to believe that the rock is ponderous when it overhangs so far, and it has no more real effect upon him than the imagined rocks of a fairy tale.

Fig. 88.

Though, therefore, the subject sketched on this page is sufficiently trifling in itself, it is important as a perfect general type of the overhanging of that kind of precipices, and of the mode in which they are connected with the banks above. Fig. 88 shows its abstract leading lines, consisting of one great parabolic line $x\ y$ fall-

ing to the brow, curved aqueous lines down the precipice face, and the springing lines of its vegetation, opposed by contrary curves on the farther cliff. Such an arrangement, with or without vegetation, may take place on a small or large scale; but a bolder projection than this, except by rare accident, and on a small scale, cannot. If the reader will glance back to Plate 37, and observe the arrangement of the precipices on the right hand, he will now better undertand what Turner means by them. But the whole question of the beauty of this form, or mode of its development, rests on the nature of the bank above the cliffs, and of the aqueous forces that carved it; and this discussion of the nature of banks, as it will take some time, had better be referred to next chapter. One or two more points are, however, to be stated here.

§ 39. For the reader has probably been already considering how it is that these overhanging cliffs are formed at all, and why they appear thus to be consumed away at the bottom. Sometimes if of soft material they actually *are* so consumed by the quicker trickling of streamlets at the base than at the summit, or by the general action of damp in decomposing the rock. But in the noblest instances, such cliffs are constructed as at *c* in Fig. 73, above, and the inward retirement of the precipice is the result of their tendency to break at right angles to the beds, modified according to the power of the rock to support itself, and the aqueous action from above or below.

I have before alluded (in p. 204) to this somewhat perilous arrangement permitted in the secondary strata. The danger, be it observed, is not of the fall of the *brow* of the precipice, which never takes place on a large scale in rocks of this kind (compare § 3 of this chapter), but of the sliding of one bed completely away from another, and the whole mass coming down together. But even this, though it has several times occurred in Switzer-

land, is not a whit more likely to happen when the precipice is terrific than when it is insignificant. The danger results from the imperfect adhesion of the mountain beds; not at all from the external form of them. A cliff, which is in aspect absolutely awful, may hardly, in the part of it that overhangs, add one thousandth part to the gravitating power of the entire mass of the rocks above; and, for the comfort of nervous travellers, they may be assured that they are often in more danger under the gentle slopes of a pleasantly wooded hill, than under the most terrific cliffs of the Eiger or Jungfrau.

§ 40. The most interesting examples of these cliffs are

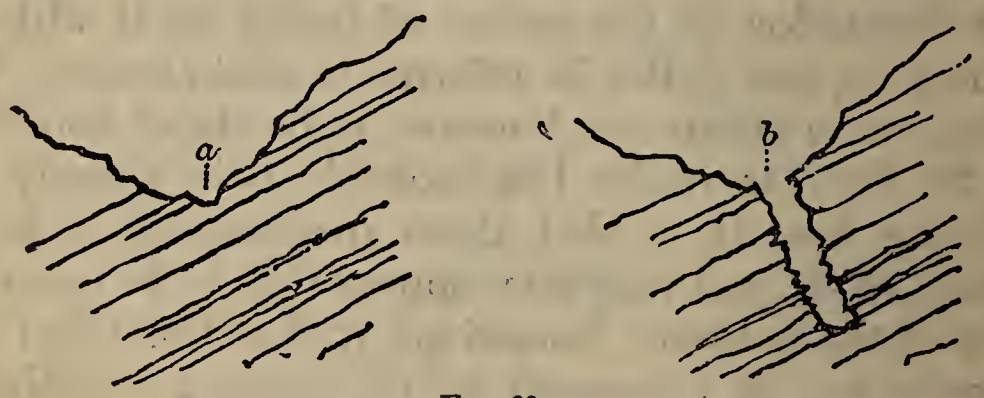


Fig. 89.

usually to be seen impendent above strong torrents, which, if forced originally to run in a valley, such as *a* in Fig. 89, bearing the relation there shown to the inclination of beds on each side, will not, if the cleavage is across the beds, cut their channel straight down, but in an inclined direction, correspondent to the cleavage, as at *b*. If the operation be carried far, so as to undermine one side of the ravine too seriously, the undermined masses fall, partially choke the torrent, and give it a new direction of force, or diminish its sawing power by breaking it among the fallen masses, so that the cliff never becomes very high in such an impendent form; but the trench is hewn downwards in a direction irregularly vertical. Among the limestones on the north side of the Valles, they being just soft enough to yield easily

to the water, and yet so hard as to maintain themselves in massy precipices, when once hewn to the shape, there are defiles of whose depth and proportions I am almost afraid to state what I believe to be the measurements, so much do they differ from any which I have seen assigned by scientific men as the limits of precipitous formation. I can only say that my deliberate impression of the great ravine cut by the torrent which descends from the Aletsch glacier, about half-way between the glacier and Brieg, was, that its depth is between a *thousand and fifteen hundred* feet, by a breadth of between *forty and a hundred.*

But I could not get to the edge of its cliffs, for the tops rounded away into the chasm, and, of course, all actual measurement was impossible. There are other similar clefts between the Bietschhorn and the Gemmi; and the one before spoken of at Ardon, about five miles below Sion, though quite unimportant in comparison, presents some boldly overhanging precipices easily observed by the passing traveller, as they are close to the road. The glen through which the torrent of the Trient descends into the valley of the Rhone, near Martigny, though not above three or four hundred feet deep, is also notable for its narrowness, and for the magnificent hardness of the rock through which it is cut,—a gneiss twisted with quartz into undulations like those of a Damascus sabre, and as compact as its steel.

§ 41. It is not possible to get the complete expression of these ravines, any more than of the apse of a Gothic cathedral, into a picture, as their elevation cannot be drawn on a vertical plane in front of the eye, the head needing to be thrown back, in order to measure their height, or stooped to penetrate their depth. But the structure and expression of the entrance to one of them have been made by Turner the theme of his sublime mountain-study (Mill near the Grande Chartreuse) in the Liber Studiorum; nor does he seem ever to have been

weary of recurring for various precipice-subject, to the ravines of the Via Mala and St. Gothard. I will not injure any of these—his noblest works—by giving imperfect copies of them; the reader has now data enough whereby to judge, when he meets with them, whether they are well done or ill; and, indeed, all that I am endeavoring to do here, as often aforesaid, is only to get some laws of the simplest kind understood and accepted, so as to enable people who care at all for justice to make a stand at once beside the modern mountain-drawing, as distinguished from Salvator's, or Claude's, or any other spurious work. Take, for instance, such a law as this of the general oblique inclination of a torrent's sides, Fig. 89, and compare the Turnerian gorge in the distance of Plate 21 here, or of the Grande Chartreuse subject in the Liber Studiorum, and consider whether anywhere else in art you can find similar expressions of the law.

"Well; but you have come to no conclusions in this chapter respecting the Beauty of Precipices; and that was your professed business with them."

§ 42. I am not sure that the idea of beauty was meant in general to be very strictly connected with such mountain forms: one does not, instinctively, speak or think of a "Beautiful Precipice." They have, however, their beauty, and it is infinite; yet so dependent on help or change from other things, on the way the pines crest them, or the waterfalls color them, or the clouds isolate them, that I do not choose to dwell here on any of their perfect aspects, as they cannot be reasoned of by anticipating inquiries into other materials of landscape.

Thus, I have much to say of the cliffs of Grindelwald and the Chartreuse, but all so dependent upon certain facts belonging to pine vegetation, that I am compelled to defer it to the next volume; nor do I much regret this; because it seems to me that, without any setting forth, or rather beyond all setting forth, the Alpine pre-

cipices have a fascination about them which is sufficiently felt by the spectator in general, and even by the artist; only they have not been properly drawn, because people do not usually attribute the magnificence of their effect to the trifling details which really are its elements; and, therefore, in common drawings of Swiss scenery we see all kinds of efforts at sublimity by exaggeration of the projection of the mass, or by obscurity, or blueness of aerial tint,—by everything, in fact, except the one needful thing,—plain drawing of the rock. Therefore in this chapter I have endeavored to direct the reader to a severe mathematical estimate of precipice outline, and to make him dwell, not on the immediately pathetic or impressive aspect of cliffs, which all men feel readily enough, but on their internal structure. For he may rest assured that, as the Matterhorn is built of mica flakes, so every great pictorial impression in scenery of this kind is to be reached by little and little; the cliff must be built in the picture as it was probably in reality—inch by inch; and the work will, in the end, have most power which was begun with most patience. No man is fit to paint Swiss scenery until he can place himself front to front with one of those mighty crags, in broad daylight, with no "effect" to aid him, and work it out, boss by boss, only with such conventionality as its infinitude renders unavoidable. We have seen that a literal fac-simile is impossible, just as a literal fac-simile of the carving of an entire cathedral front is impossible. But it is as vain to endeavor to give any conception of an Alpine cliff without minuteness of detail, and by mere breadth of effect, as it would be to give a conception of the façades of Rouen or Rheims, without indicating any statues or foliation. When the statues and foliation are once got, as much blue mist and thunder-cloud as you choose, but not before.

§ 43. I commend, therefore, in conclusion, the preci-

pice to the artist's *patience;* to which there is this farther and final encouragement, that, though one of the most difficult of subjects, it is one of the kindest of sitters. A group of trees changes the color of its leafage from week to week, and its position from day to day; it is sometimes languid with heat, and sometimes heavy with rain; the torrent swells or falls in shower or sun; the best leaves of the foreground may be dined upon by cattle, or trampled by unwelcome investigators of the chosen scene. But the cliff can neither be eaten nor trampled down; neither bowed by the shower nor withered by the heat: it is always ready for us when we are inclined to labor; will always wait for us when we would rest; and, what is best of all, will always talk to us when we are inclined to converse. With its own patient and victorious presence, cleaving daily through cloud after cloud, and reappearing still through the tempest drift, lofty and serene amidst the passing rents of blue, it seems partly to rebuke, and partly to guard, and partly to calm and chasten, the agitations of the feeble human soul that watches it; and that must be indeed a dark perplexity, or a grievous pain, which will not be in some degree enlightened or relieved by the vision of it, when the evening shadows are blue on its foundation, and the last rays of the sunset resting in the fair height of its golden Fortitude.

CHAPTER XVII.

RESULTING FORMS :—FOURTHLY, BANKS.

§ 1. During all our past investigations of hill form, we have been obliged to refer continually to certain results produced by the action of descending streams or falling stones. The actual contours assumed by any mountain range towards its foot depend usually more upon this torrent sculpture than on the original conformation of the masses; the existing hill side is commonly an accumulation of débris; the existing glen commonly an excavated watercourse; and it is only here and there that portions of rock, retaining impress of their original form, jut from the bank, or shelve across the stream.

§ 2. Now, this sculpture by streams, or by gradual weathering, is the finishing work by which Nature brings her mountain forms into the state in which she intends us generally to observe and love them. The violent convulsion or disruption by which she first raises and separates the masses, may frequently be intended to produce impressions of terror rather than of beauty; but the laws which are in constant operation on all noble and enduring scenery must assuredly be intended to produce results grateful to men. Therefore, as in this final pencilling of Nature's we shall probably find her ideas of mountain beauty most definitely expressed, it may be well that, before entering on this part of our subject, we should recapitulate the laws respecting beauty of form which we arrived at in the abstract.

§ 3. Glancing back to the fourteenth and fifteenth paragraphs of the chapter on Infinity, in the second volume, and to the third and tenth of the chapters on Unity, the reader will find that abstract beauty of form is supposed to depend on continually varied curvatures of line and surface, associated so as to produce an effect of some unity among themselves, and opposed, in order to give them value, by more or less straight or rugged lines.

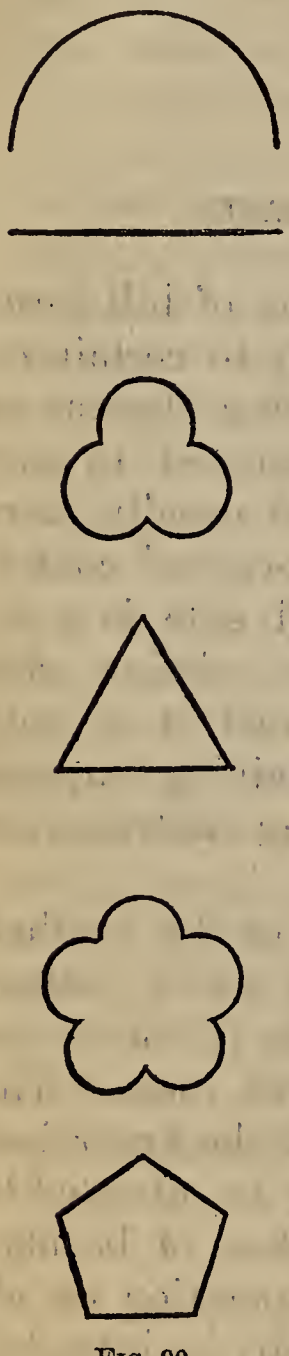


Fig. 90.

The reader will, perhaps, here ask why, if both the straight and curved lines are necessary, one should be considered more beautiful than the other. Exactly as we consider light beautiful and darkness ugly, in the abstract, though both are essential to all beauty. Darkness mingled with color gives the delight of its depth or power; even pure blackness, in spots or chequered patterns, is often exquisitely delightful; and yet we do not therefore consider, in the abstract, blackness to be beautiful.

Just in the same way straightness mingled with curvature, that is to say, the close approximation of part of any curve to a straight line, gives to such curve all its spring, power, and nobleness: and even perfect straightness, limiting curves, or opposing them, is often pleasurable: yet, in the abstract, straightness is always ugly, and curvature always beautiful. Thus, in the figure at the side, the eye will instantly prefer the semicircle to the straight line; the trefoil (composed of three semicircles) to the triangle; and the cinqfoil to the pen-

tagon. The mathematician may perhaps feel an opposite preference; but he must be conscious that he does so under the influence of feelings quite different from those with which he would admire (if he ever does admire) a picture or statue; and that if he could free himself from those associations, his judgment of the relative agreeableness of the forms would be altered. He may rest assured that, by the natural instinct of the eye and thought, the preference is given instantly, and always,

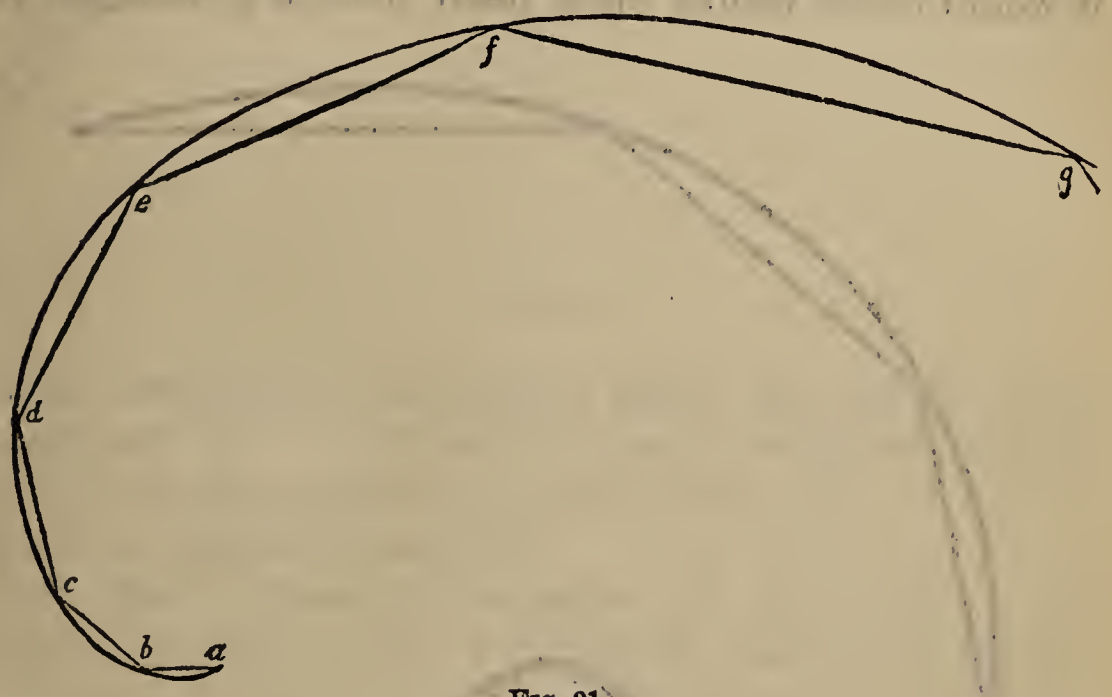


FIG. 91.

to the curved form; and that no human being of unprejudiced perceptions would desire to substitute triangles for the ordinary shapes of clover leaves, or pentagons for those of potentillas.

§ 4. All curvature, however, is not equally agreeable; but the examination of the laws which render one curve more beautiful than another, would, if carried out to any completeness, alone require a volume. The following few examples will be enough to put the reader in the way of pursuing the subject for himself.

Take any number of lines, *a b*, *b c*, *c d*, &c., Fig. 91, bearing any fixed proportion to each other. In this fig-

ure, *b c* is one-third longer than *a b*, and *c d* than *b c*; and so on. Arrange them in succession, keeping the inclination, or angle, which each makes with the preceding one always the same. Then a curve drawn through the extremities of the lines will be a beautiful curve; for it is governed by consistent laws; every part of it is connected by those laws with every other, yet every part is different from every other; and the mode of its construction implies the possibility of its continuance to infinity; it would never return upon itself though prolonged for

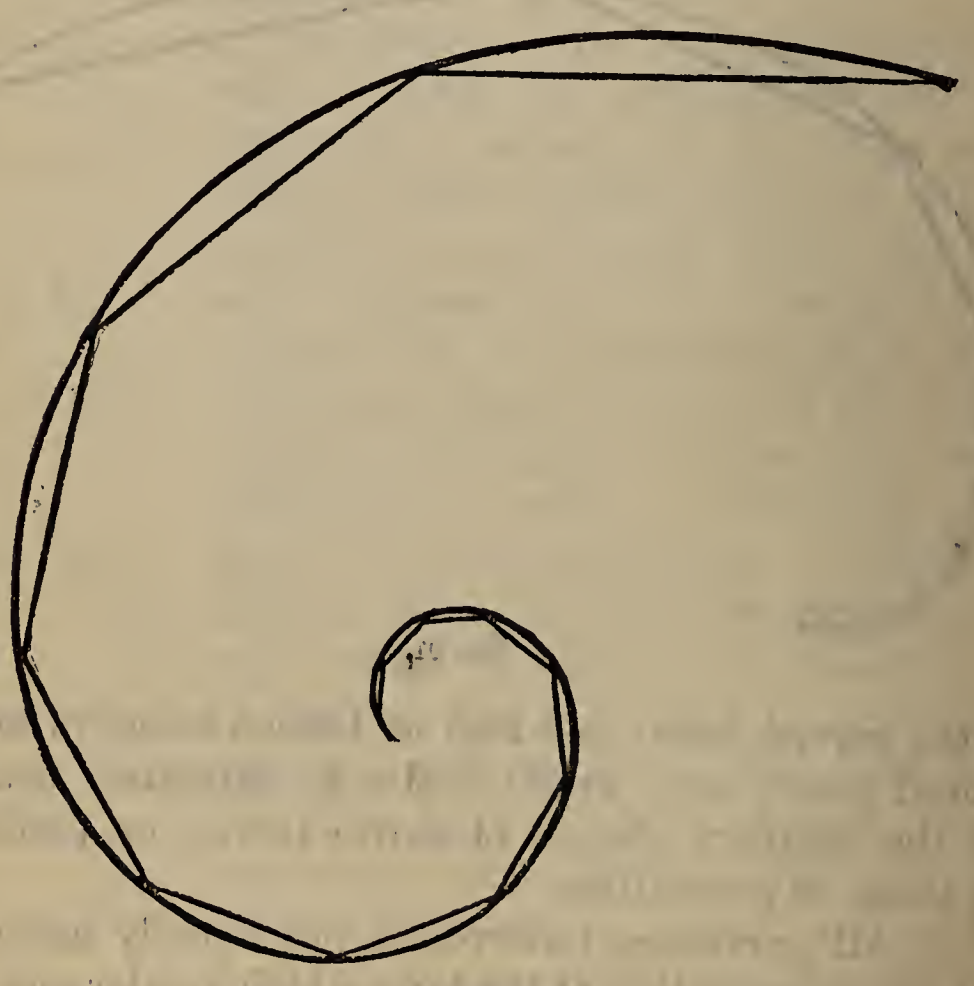


Fig. 92.

ever. These characters must be possessed by every perfectly beautiful curve.

If we make the difference between the component or measuring lines less, as in Fig. 92, in which each line is longer than the preceding one only by a fifth, the curve

will be more contracted and less beautiful. If we enlarge the difference, as in Fig. 93, in which each line is double the preceding one, the curve will suggest a more

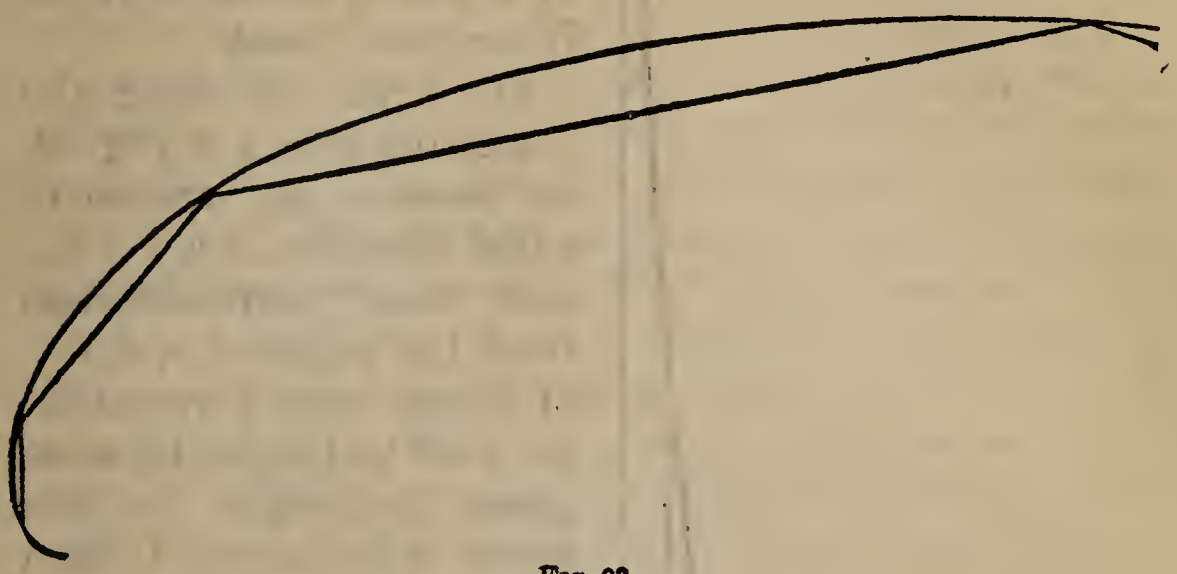


Fig. 93.

rapid proceeding into infinite space, and will be more beautiful. Of two curves, the same in other respects, that which suggests the quickest attainment of infinity is always the most beautiful.

§ 5. These three curves being all governed by the same general law, with a difference only in dimensions of lines, together with all the other curves so constructible, varied as they may be infinitely, either by changing the lengths of line, or the inclination of the lines to each other, are considered by mathematicians only as one curve, having this peculiar character about it, different from that of most other infinite lines, that any portion of it is a magnified repetition of the preceding portion; that is to say, the portion between *e* and *g* is precisely what that between *c* and *e* would look, if seen through a lens which magnified somewhat more than twice. There is therefore a peculiar equanimity and harmony about the look of lines of this kind, differing, I think, from the expression of any others except the circle. Beyond the point *a* the curve may be imagined to

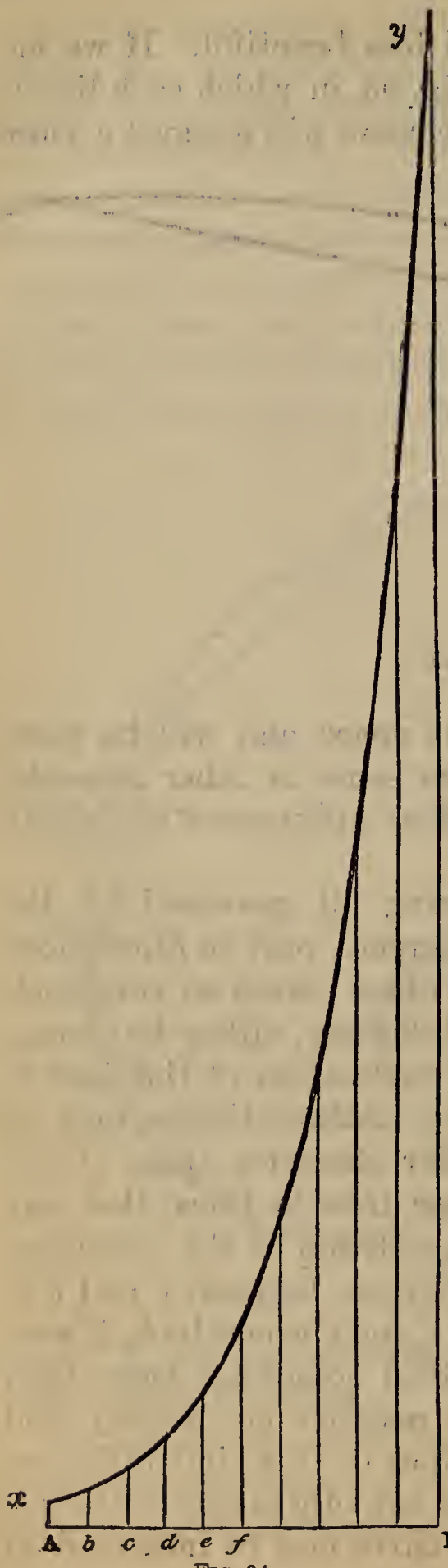


FIG. 94.

continue to an infinite degree of smallness, always circling nearer and nearer to a point, which, however, it can never reach.

§ 6. Again: if along the horizontal line, A B, Fig. 94, we measure any number of equal distances, A *b*, *b c*, &c., and raise perpendiculars from the points *b*, *c*, *d*, &c., of which each perpendicular shall be longer, by some given proportion (in this figure it is one-third), than the preceding one, the curve *x y*, traced through their extremities, will continually change its direction, but will advance into space in the direction of *y* as long as we continue to measure distances along the line A B, always inclining more and more to the nature of a straight line, yet never becoming one, even if continued to infinity. It would, in like manner, continue to infinity in the direction of *x*, always approaching the line A B, yet never touching it.

§ 7. An infinite number of different lines, more or less violent in curvature according to the measurements we

adopt in designing them, are included, or defined, by each of the laws just explained. But the number of these laws themselves is also infinite. There is no limit to the multitude of conditions which may be invented, each producing a group of curves of a certain common nature. Some of these laws, indeed, produce single curves, which, like the circle, can vary only in size; but, for the most part, they vary also, like the lines we have just traced, in the rapidity of their curvature. Among these innumerable lines, however, there is one source of difference in character which divides them, infinite as they are in number, into two great classes. The first class consists of those which are limited in their course, either ending abruptly, or returning to some point from which they set out; the second class, of those lines whose nature is to proceed for ever into space. Any portion of a circle, for instance, is, by the law of its being, compelled, if it continue its course, to return to the point from which it set out; so also any portion of the oval curve (called an ellipse), produced by cutting a cylinder obliquely across. And if a single point be marked on the rim of a carriage wheel, this point, as the wheel rolls along the road, will trace a curve in the air from one part of the road to another, which is called a cycloid, and to which the law of its existence appoints that it shall always follow a similar course, and be terminated by the level line on which the wheel rolls. All such curves are of inferior beauty: and the curves which are incapable of being completely drawn, because, as in the two cases above given, the law of their being supposes them to proceed for ever into space, are of a higher beauty.

§ 8. Thus, in the very first elements of form, a lesson is given us as to the true source of the nobleness and chooseableness of all things. The two classes of curves thus sternly separated from each other, may most prop-

erly be distinguished as the "Mortal and Immortal Curves;" the one having an appointed term of existence, the other absolutely incomprehensible and endless, only to be seen or grasped during a certain moment of their course. And it is found universally that the class to which the human mind is attached for its chief enjoyment are the Endless or Immortal lines.

§ 9. "Nay," but the reader answers, "what right have you to say that one class is more beautiful than the other? Suppose I like the finite curves best, who shall say which of us is right?"

No one. It is simply a question of experience. You will not, I think, continue to like the finite curves best as you contemplate them carefully, and compare them with the others. And if you should do so, it then yet becomes a question to be decided by longer trial, or more widely canvassed opinion. And when we find on examination that every form which, by the consent of human kind, has been received as lovely, in vases, flowing ornaments, embroideries, and all other things dependent on abstract line, is composed of these infinite curves, and that Nature uses them for every important contour, small or large, which she desires to recommend to human observance, we shall not, I think, doubt that the preference of such lines is a sign of healthy taste, and true instinct.

§ 10. I am not sure, however, how far the delightfulness of such line, is owing, not merely to their expression of infinity, but also to that of restraint or moderation. Compare Stones of Venice, vol. iii. chap. i. § 9, where the subject is entered into at some length. Certainly the beauty of such curvature is owing, in a considerable degree, to both expressions; but when the line is sharply terminated, perhaps more to that of moderation than of infinity. For the most part, gentle or subdued sounds, and gentle or subdued colors, are more pleasing than

either in their utmost force; nevertheless, in all the noblest compositions, this utmost power is permitted, but only for a short time, or over a small space. Music must rise to its utmost loudness, and fall from it; color must be gradated to its extreme brightness, and descend from it; and I believe that absolutely perfect treatment would, in either case, permit the intensest sound and purest color only for a point or for a moment.

Curvature is regulated by precisely the same laws. For the most part, delicate or slight curvature is more agreeable than violent or rapid curvature; nevertheless, in the best compositions, violent curvature is permitted, but permitted only over small spaces in the curve.

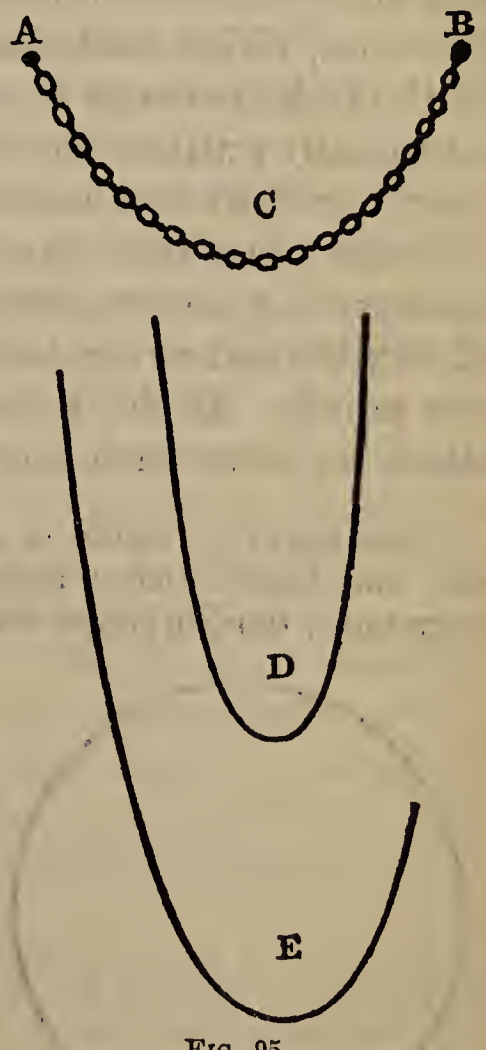


FIG. 95.

§ 11. The right line is to the curve what monotony is to melody, and what unvaried color is to gradated color. And as often the sweetest music is so low and continuous as to approach a monotone; and as often the sweetest gradations so delicate and subdued as to approach to flatness, so the finest curves are apt to hover about the right line, nearly coinciding with it for a long space of their curve; never absolutely losing their own curvilinear character, but apparently every moment on the point of merging into the right line. When this is the case, the line generally returns into vigorous curvature at some part of its course, otherwise it is apt to be weak, or slightly rigid; multitudes

of other curves, not approaching the right line so nearly, remain less vigorously bent in the rest of their course; so that the quantity* of curvature is the same in both, though differently distributed.

§ 12. The modes in which Nature produces variable curves on a large scale are very numerous, but may generally be resolved into the gradual increase or diminution of some given force. Thus, if a chain hangs between two points A and B, Fig. 95, the weight of chain sustained by any given link increases gradually from the central link at C, which has only its own weight to sustain, to the link at B, which sustains, besides its own, the weight of all the links between it and C. This increased weight is continually pulling the curve of the swinging chain more nearly straight as it ascends towards B; and hence one of the most beautifully gradated natural curves—called the catenary—of course assumed not by chains only, but by all flexible and elongated substances, suspended between two points. If the points of suspension be near each other, we have such curves as at D; and if, as in nine

* *Quantity* of curvature is as measurable as quantity of anything else; only observe that it depends on the nature of the line, not on its magnitude; thus, in simple circular curvature, *a b*, Fig. 96, being the

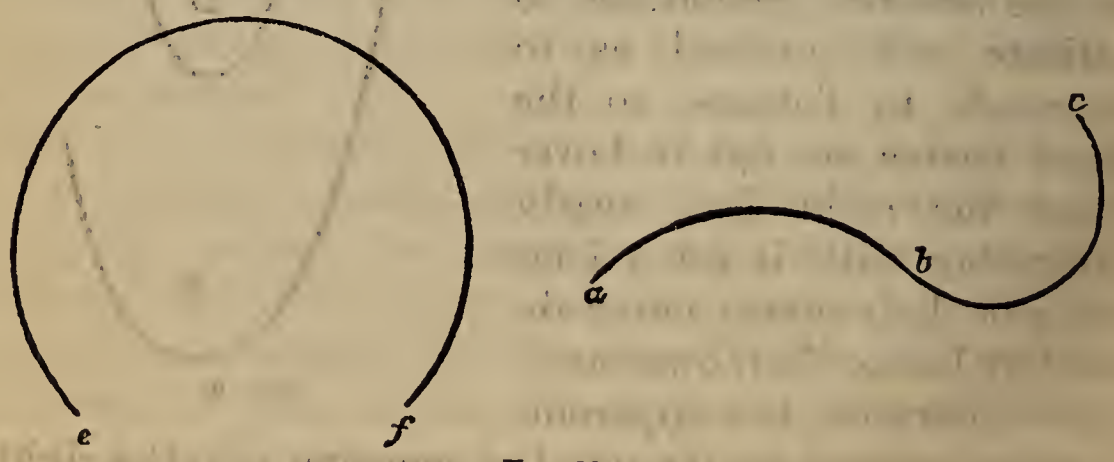


Fig. 96.

fourth of a large circle, and *b c* the half of a smaller one, the quantity of the element of circular curvature in the entire line *a c* is three-fourths of that in *any* circle,—the same as the quantity in the line *e f*.

cases out of ten will be the case, one point of suspension is lower than the other, a still more varied and beautiful curve is formed, as at E. Such curves constitute nearly the whole beauty of general contour in falling drapery, tendrils and festoons of weeds over rocks, and such other pendent objects.*

§ 13. Again. If any object be cast into the air, the force with which it is cast dies gradually away, and its own weight brings it downwards; at first slowly, then faster and faster every moment, in a curve which, as the line of fall necessarily nears the perpendicular, is continually approximating to a straight line. This curve—called the parabola—is that of all projected or bounding objects.

§ 14. Again. If a rod or stick of any kind gradually becomes more slender or more flexible, and is bent by any external force, the force will not only increase in effect as the rod becomes weaker, but the rod itself, once bent, will continually yield more willingly, and be more easily bent farther in the same direction, and will thus show a continual increase of curvature from its thickest or most rigid part to its extremity. This kind of line is that assumed by boughs of trees under wind.

§ 15. Again. Whenever any vital force is impressed on any organic substance, so as to die gradually away as the substance extends, an infinite curve is commonly produced by its outline. Thus, in the budding of the leaf, already examined, the gradual dying away of the

* The catenary is not properly a curve capable of infinity, if its direction does not alter with its length; but it is capable of infinity, implying such alteration by the infinite removal of the points of suspension. It entirely corresponds in its effect on the eye and mind to the infinite curves. I do not know the exact nature of the apparent curves of suspension formed by a high and weighty waterfall; they are dependent on the gain in rapidity of descent by the central current, where its greater body is less arrested by the air; and I apprehend, are catenary in character, though not in cause.

exhilaration of the younger ribs produces an infinite curve in the outline of the leaf, which sometimes fades imperceptibly into a right line, — sometimes is terminated sharply, by meeting the opposite curve at the point of the leaf.

§ 16. Nature, however, rarely condescends to use one curve only in any of her finer forms. She almost always unites two infinite ones, so as to form a reversed curve for each main line, and then modulates each of them into myriads of minor ones. In a single elm leaf, such as Fig. 4, Plate 8, she uses three such—one for the stalk, and one for each of the sides,—to regulate their *general* flow; dividing afterwards each of their broad lateral lines into some twenty less curves by the jags of the leaf, and then again into minor waves. Thus, in any complicated group of leaves whatever, the infinite curves are themselves almost countless. In a single extremity of a magnolia spray, the uppermost figure in Plate 43, including only sixteen leaves, each leaf having some three to five distinct curves along its edge, the lines for separate study, including those of the stems, would be between sixty and eighty. In a single spring-shoot of laburnum, the lower figure in the same plate, I leave the reader to count them for himself; all these, observe, being seen at one view only, and every change of position bringing into sight another equally numerous set of curves. For instance, in Plate 44 is a group of four withered leaves, in four positions, giving, each, a beautiful and well-composed group of curves, variable gradually into the next group as the branch is turned.

§ 17. The following Plate (45), representing a young shoot of independent ivy, just beginning to think it would like to get something to cling to, shows the way in which Nature brings subtle curvature into forms that at first seem rigid. The stems of the young leaves look nearly straight, and the sides of the projecting points,

PLATE XLIII.—LEAF CURVATURE. MAGNOLIA AND LABURNUM.

PLATE XLV.—LEAF CURVATURE. YOUNG IVY.

or bastions, of the leaves themselves nearly so; but on examination it will be found that there is not a stem nor a leaf-edge but is a portion of one infinite curve, if not of two or three. The main line of the supporting stem is a very lovely one; and the little half-opened leaves, in their thirteenth-century segmental simplicity (compare Fig. 9, Plate 8 in Vol. III.), singularly spirited and beautiful. It may, perhaps, interest the general reader to know that one of the infinite curves derives its name from its supposed resemblance to the climbing of ivy up a tree.

§ 18. I spoke just now of "well-composed" curves—I mean curves so arranged as to oppose and set each other off, and yet united by a common law; for as the beauty of every curve depends on the unity of its several component lines, so the beauty of each group of curves depends on their submission to some general law. In forms which quickly attract the eye, the law which unites the curves is distinctly manifest; but, in the richer compositions of Nature, cunningly concealed by delicate infractions of it;—wilfulnesses they seem, and forgetfulnesses, which, if once the law be perceived, only increase our delight in it by showing that it is one of equity, not of rigor, and allows, within certain limits, a kind of individual liberty. Thus the system of unison which regulates the magnolia shoot, in Plate 42, is formally expressed in Fig. 97. Every line has its origin in the point P, and the curves generally diminish in intensity towards the extremities of the leaves, one or two, however, again increasing their sweep near the points. In vulgar ornamentation, entirely rigid laws of line are always observed; and the common Greek honeysuckle and other such formalisms are attractive to uneducated eyes, owing to their manifest compliance with the first conditions of unity and symmetry, being to really noble ornamentation what the sing-song of a bad reader of po-

etry, laying regular emphasis on every required syllable of every foot, is to the varied, irregular, unexpected, inimitable cadence of the voice of a person of sense and feeling reciting the same lines,—not incognisant of the rhythm, but delicately bending it to the expression of passion, and the natural sequence of the thought.

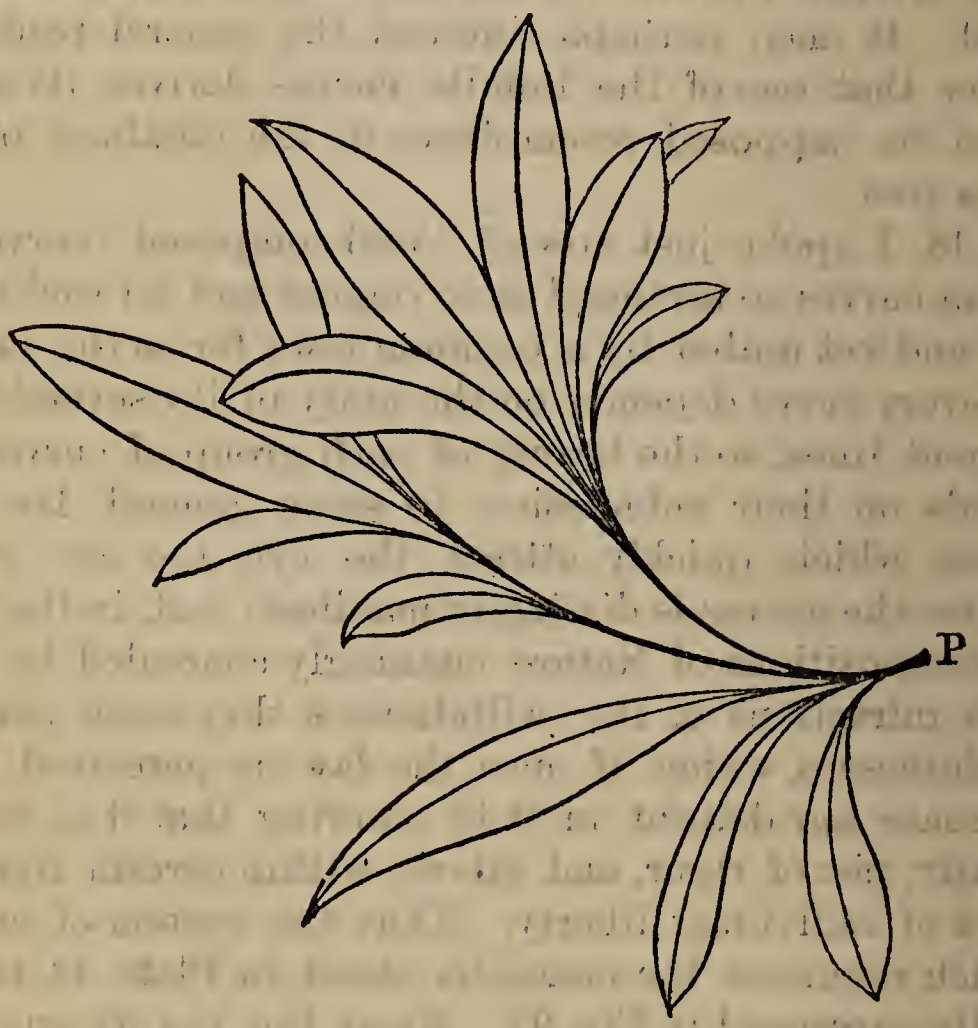


Fig. 97.

§ 19. In mechanically drawn patterns of dress, Alhambra and common Moorish ornament, Greek mouldings, common flamboyant traceries, common Corinthian and Ionic capitals, and such other work, lines of this declared kind (generally to be classed under the head of "doggerel ornamentation") may be seen in rich profusion; and they are necessarily the only kind of lines which can be felt or enjoyed by persons who have

been educated without reference to natural forms; their instincts being blunt, and their eyes actually incapable of perceiving the inflexion of noble curves. But the moment the perceptions have been refined by reference to natural form, the eye requires perpetual variation and transgression of the formal law. Take the simplest possible condition of thirteenth-century scroll-work, Fig. 98. The law or cadence established is of a circling tendril, terminating in an ivy-leaf. In vulgar design, the curves of the circling tendril would have been similar to each other, and might have been drawn by a machine, or by some mathematical formula. But in good design all imitation by machinery is impossible. No curve is like another for an instant; no branch springs at an expected point. A cadence is observed, as in the returning clauses of a beautiful air in music; but every clause has its own change, its own surprises. The enclosing form is here stiff and (nearly) straight-sided, in order to oppose the circular scroll-work; but on looking close it will be found that each of its sides is a portion of an infinite curve, almost too delicate to be traced; except the short lowest one, which is made quite straight, to oppose the rest.

Fig. 98.

I give one more example from another leaf of the same manuscript, Fig. 99, merely to show the variety introduced by the old designers between page and page. And, in general, the reader may take it for a settled law that, whatever can be done by machinery, or imitated by formula, is not worth doing or imitating at all.

§ 20. The quantity of admissible transgression of law

varies with the degree in which the ornamentation involves or admits imitation of nature. Thus, if these ivy leaves in Fig. 99 were completely drawn in light and shade, they would not be properly connected with the more or less regular sequences of the scroll; and in every subordinate ornament, something like complete symmetry may be admitted, as in bead mouldings, chequerings, &c. Also, the ways in which the transgression may be granted vary infinitely; in the finest compositions it is perpetual, and yet so balanced and atoned for as always to bring about more beauty than if there had been no transgression. In a truly fine mountain or organic line, if it is looked at in detail, no one would believe in its being a continuous curve, or being subjected to any fixed law. It seems broken, and bending a thousand ways; perfectly free and wild, and yielding to every impulse. But, after following with the eye three or four of its impulses, we shall begin to trace some strange order among them; every added movement will make the ruling intent clearer; and when the whole life of the line is revealed at last, it will be found to have been, throughout, as obedient to the true law of its course as the stars in their orbits.

Fig. 99.

§ 21. Thus much may suffice for our immediate purpose respecting beautiful lines in general.

The four systems of mountain line.

We have now to consider the particular groups of them belonging to mountains.

The lines which are produced by course of time upon hill contours are mainly divisible into four systems.

1. Lines of Fall. Those which are wrought out on the solid mass by the fall of water or of stones.

2. Lines of Projection. Those which are produced in débris by the bounding of the masses, under the influence of their falling force.

3. Lines of Escape. Those which are produced by the spreading of débris from a given point over surfaces of varied shape.

4. Lines of Rest. Those which are assumed by débris when in a state of comparative permanence and stability.

1. Lines of Fall.

1. Lines of Fall. Produced by falling bodies upon hill-surfaces.

However little the reader may be acquainted with hills, I believe that, almost instinctively, he will perceive that the form supposed to belong to a wooded promontory at *a*, Fig. 100, is an impossible one; and that the form at *b* is not only a possible but probable one. The lines are equally formal in both. But in *a*, the curve is a portion of a circle, meeting a level line: in *b* it is an infinite line, getting less and less steep as it ascends.

Whenever a mass of mountain is worn gradually away by forces descending from its top, it *necessarily* assumes, more or less perfectly, according to the time for which it has been exposed, and the tenderness of its substance, such contours as those at *b*, for the simple reason that every stream and every falling grain of sand gains in velocity and erosive power as it descends. Hence, cutting away the ground gradually faster and faster, they

produce the most rapid curvature (provided the rock be hard enough) towards the bottom of the hill.*

§ 22. But farther: in *b* it will be noticed that the lines always get steeper as they fall more and more to the right; and I should think the reader must feel that they look more natural, so drawn, than, as at *a*, in unvarying curves.

This is no less easily accounted for. The simplest typical form under which a hill can occur is that of a

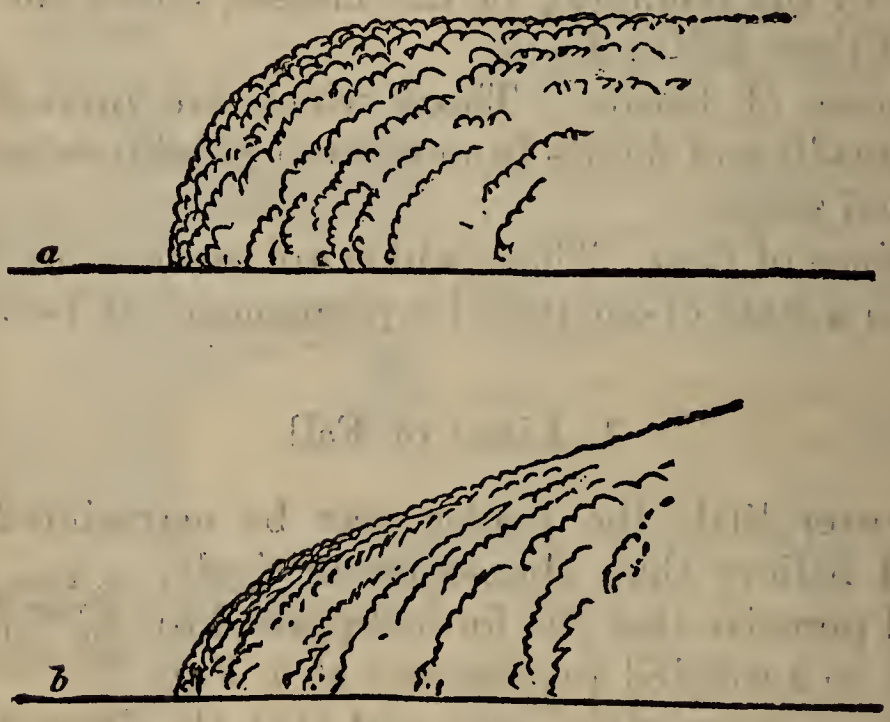


FIG. 100.

cone. Let A C B, Fig. 101, have been its original contour. Then the aqueous forces will cut away the shaded portions, reducing it to the outline *d* C *e*. Farther, in

* I am afraid of becoming tiresome by going too far into the intricacies of this most difficult subject; but I say, "*towards* the bottom of the hill," because when a certain degree of verticality is reached, a counter protective influence begins to establish itself, the stones and waterfalls bounding away from the brow of the precipice into the air, and wearing it at the top only. Also, it is evident that when the curvature falls into a vertical cliff, as often happens, the maximum of curvature must be somewhere *above* the brow of the cliff, as in the cliff itself it has again died into a straight line.

doing so, the water will certainly have formed for itself gullies or channels from top to bottom. These, supposing them at equal distances round the cone, will appear, in perspective, in the lines *g h i*. It does not, of course, matter whether we consider the lines in this figure to represent the bottom of the ravines, or the ridges between, both being formed on similar curves; but the rounded lines in Fig. 100 would be those of forests seen on the edges of each detached ridge.

§ 23. Now, although a mountain is rarely perfectly conical, and never divided by ravines at exactly equal distances, the law which is seen in entire simplicity in Fig. 101, applies with a sway more or less interrupted, but

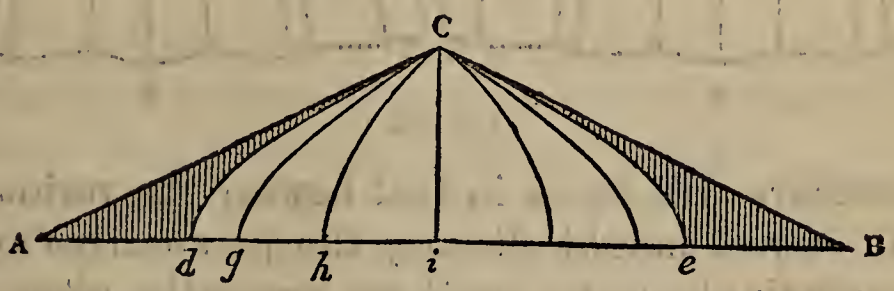


Fig. 101.

always manifest, to every convex and retiring mountain form. All banks that thus turn away from the spectator necessarily are thrown into perspectives like that of one side of this figure; and although not divided with equality, their irregular divisions crowd gradually together towards the distant edge, being then less steep, and separate themselves towards the body of the hill, being then more steep.

§ 24. It follows, also, that not only the whole of the nearer curves will be steeper, but, if seen from below, the steepest parts of them will be the more important. Supposing each, instead of a curve, divided into a sloping line and a precipitous one, the perspective of the precipice, raising its top continually, will give the whole cone the shape of *a* or *b* in Fig. 102, in which,

observe, the precipice is of more importance, and the slope of less, precisely in proportion to the nearness of the mass.

§ 25. Fig. 102, therefore, will be the general type of the form of a convex retiring hill symmetrically constructed. The precipitous part of it may vary in height or in slope according to original conformation; but the heights being supposed equal along the whole flank,

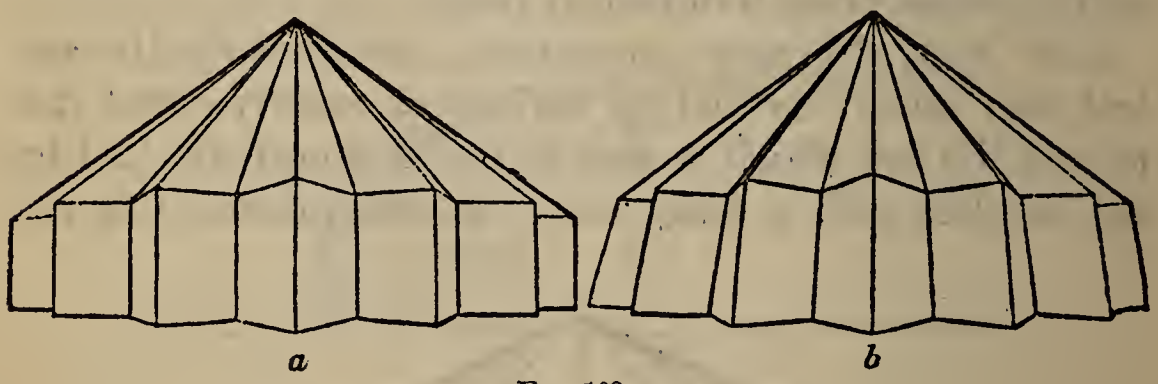


Fig. 102.

the contours will be as in that figure; the various rise and fall of real height altering the perspective appearance accordingly, as we shall see presently, after examining the other three kinds of line.

2. Lines of Projection.

§ 26. The fragments carried down by the torrents from the flanks of the hill are of course deposited at the base of it. But they are deposited in various ways, of which it is most difficult to analyze the laws; for they are thrown down under the influence partly of flowing water, partly of their own gravity, partly of projectile force caused by their fall from the higher summits of the hill; while the débris itself, after it has fallen, undergoes farther modification by surface streamlets. But in a general way débris descending from the hill side, *a b*, Fig. 103, will arrange itself in a form approximating to the concave line *d c*, the larger masses re-

2. Lines of Projection. Produced by fragments bounding or carried forward from the bases of hills.

maining undisturbed at the bottom, while the smaller are gradually carried farther and farther by surface streams.

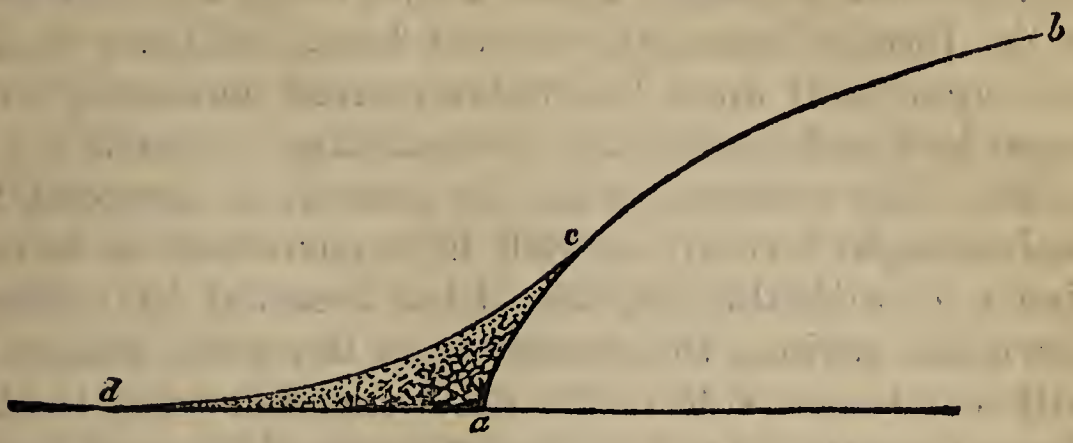


FIG. 103.

3. Lines of Escape.

§ 27. But this form is much modified by the special direction of the descending force as it escapes from confinement. For a stream coming down a ravine is kept by the steep sides of its channel in concentrated force: but it no sooner reaches the bottom, and escapes from its ravine, than it spreads in all directions, or at

3. Lines of Escape. Produced by the lateral dissemination of the fragments.

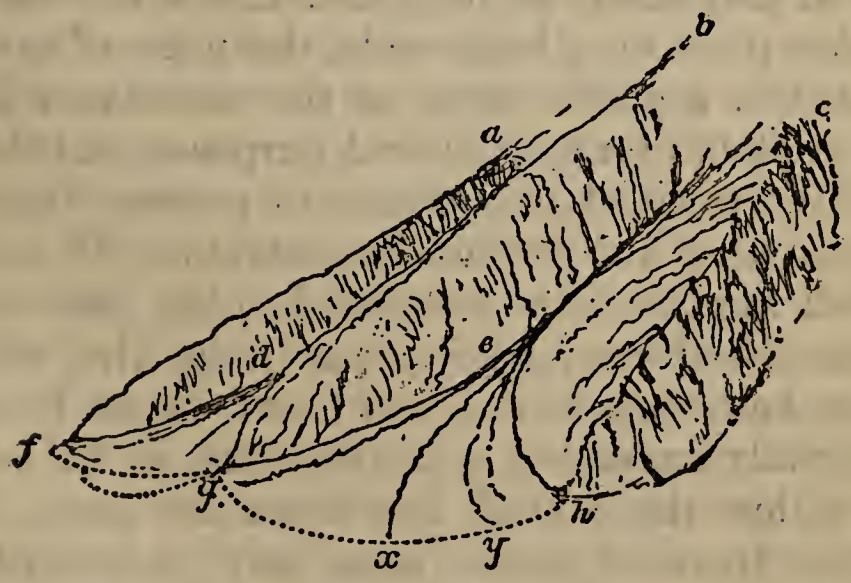


FIG. 104.

least tries to choose a new channel at every flood. Let *a b c*, Fig. 104, be three ridges of mountain. The two

torrents coming down the ravine between them meet, at *d* and *e*, with the heaps of ground formerly thrown down by their own agency. These heaps being more or less in the form of cones, the torrent has a tendency to divide upon their apex, like water poured on the top of a sugar-loaf, and branch into the radiating channels *e x*, *e y*, &c. The stronger it is, the more it is disposed to rush straight forward, or with little curvature, as in the line *e x*, with the impetus it has received in coming down the ravine; the weaker it is, the more readily it will lean to one side or the other, and fall away in the lines of escape, *e y* or *e h*; but of course at times of highest flood it fills all its possible channels, and invents a few new ones, of which afterwards the straightest will be kept by the main stream, and the lateral curves occupied by smaller branches; the whole system corresponding precisely to the action of the ribs of the young leaf, as shown in Plate 8 of Vol. III., especially in Fig. 6,—the main torrent, like the main rib, making the largest fortune, i. e. raising the highest heap of gravel and dust.

§ 28. It may easily be imagined that when the operation takes place on a large scale, the mass of earth thus deposited in a gentle slope at the mountain's foot becomes available for agricultural purposes, and that then it is of the greatest importance to prevent the stream from branching into various channels at its will, and pouring fresh sand over the cultivated fields. Accordingly, at the mouth of every large ravine in the Alps, where the peasants know how to live and how to work, the stream is artificially embanked, and compelled as far as possible to follow the central line down the cone. Hence, when the traveller passes along any great valley,—as that of the Rhone or Arve,—into which minor torrents are poured by lateral ravines, he will find himself every now and then ascending a hill of moderate slope, at the

top of which he will cross a torrent, or its bed, and descend by another gradual slope to the usual level of the valley. In every such case, his road has ascended a tongue of débris, and has crossed the embanked torrent carried by force along its centre.

Under such circumstances, the entire tongue or heap of land ceases of course to increase, until the bed of the confined torrent is partially choked by its perpetual deposit. Then in some day of violent rain the waves burst their fetters, branch at their own will, cover the fields of some unfortunate farmer with stones and slime, according to the torrent's own idea of the new form which it has become time to give to the great tongue of land, carry away the road and the bridge together, and arrange everything to their own liking. But the road is again painfully traced among the newly fallen débris; the embankment and bridge again built for the stream, now satisfied with its outbreak; and the tongue of land submitted to new processes of cultivation for a certain series of years. When, however, the torrent is exceedingly savage, and generally of a republican temper, the outbreaks are too frequent and too violent to admit of any cultivation of the tongue of land. A few straggling alder or thorn bushes, their roots buried in shingle, and their lower branches fouled with slime, alone relieve with ragged spots of green the broad waste of stones and dust. The utmost that can be done is to keep the furious stream from choosing a new channel in every one of its fits of passion, and remaining in it afterwards, thus extending its devastation in entirely unforeseen directions. The land which it has brought down must be left a perpetual sacrifice to its rage; but in the moment of its lassitude it is brought back to its central course, and compelled to forego for a few weeks or months the luxury of deviation.

§ 29. On the other hand, when, owing to the nature of

the valley above, the stream is gentle, and the sediment which it brings down small in quantity, it may be retained for long years in its constant path, while the sides of the bank of earth it has borne down are clothed with pasture and forest, seen in the distance of the great valley as a promontory of sweet verdure, along which the central stream passes with an influence of blessing, submitting itself to the will of the husbandman for irrigation, and of the mechanist for toil; now nourishing the pasture, and now grinding the corn, of the land which it has first formed, and now waters.

§ 30. I have etched above, Plate 35, a portion of the flank of the valley of Chamouni, which presents nearly every class of line under discussion, and will enable the reader to understand their relations at once. It represents, as was before stated, the crests of the Montagnes de la Côte and Taconay, shown from base to summit, with the Glacier des Bossons and its moraine. The references figure given at p. 267 will enable the reader to distinguish its several orders of curves, as follows:

h r. Aqueous curves of fall, at the base of the Tapia; very characteristic. Similar curves are seen in multitude on the two crests beyond as *b c*, *c* B.

d e. First lines of projection. The débris falling from the glacier and the heights above.

k, *l*, *n.* Three lines of escape. A considerable torrent (one of whose falls is the well-known Cascade des Pélerins *) descends from behind the promontory *h*: its natural or proper course would be to dash

* The following extract from my private diary, giving an account of the destruction of the beauty of this waterfall in the year 1849, which I happened to witness, may be interesting to those travellers who remember it before that period. The house spoken of as "Joseph's," is that of the guide Joseph Coutet, in a village about a mile below the cascade, between it and the Arve: that noticed as of the "old avalanche," is a hollow in the forest, cleft by a great avalanche which fell from the Aiguille du Midi in the spring of 1844. It struck

straight forward down the line *f g*, and part of it does so; but erratic branches of it slide away round the promontory, in the lines of escape, *k*, *l*, &c. Each row of trees marks, therefore, an old torrent bed, for the torrent always throws heaps of stones up along its banks, on which the pines, growing higher than on the neighboring ground, indicate its

down about a thousand full-grown pines, and left an open track in the midst of the wood, from the cascade nearly down to the village.

"Evening, Thursday, June 28th. I set out for the Cascade des Pélerins as usual; when we reached Joseph's house, we heard a sound from the torrent like low thunder, or like that of a more distant and heavier fall. A peasant said something to Joseph, who stopped to listen, then nodded, and said to me, 'La cascade vient de se déborder.' Thinking there would be time enough afterwards to ask for explanations, I pushed up the hill almost without asking a question. When we reached the place of the old avalanche, Joseph called to me to stop and see the torrent increase. There was at this time a dark cloud on the Aiguille du Midi, down to its base; the upper part of the torrent was brown, the lower white, not larger than usual. The brown part came down, I thought, with exceeding slowness, reaching the cascade gradually; as it did so, the fall rose to about once and a half its usual height, and in the five minutes' time that I paused (it could not be more) turned to the color of slate. I then pushed on as hard as I could. When I reached the last ascent I was obliged to stop for breath, but got up before the fall could sensibly have diminished in body of water. It was then nearly twice as far cast out from the rock as last night, and the water nearly black in color, and it had the appearance, as it broke and separated at the outer part of the fall, of a shower of fragments of flat slate. The reason of this appearance I could not comprehend, unless the water was so mixed with mud that it drew out flat and unctuously when it broke; but so it was: instead of spray it looked like a shower of dirty flat bits of slate—only with a lustre, as if they had been wet first. This, however, was the least of it, for the torrent carried with it nearly as much weight of stone as water; the stones varying in size, the average being, I suppose, about that of a hen's egg: but I do not suppose that at any instant the arch of water was without four or five as large as a man's fist, and often came larger ones,—all vomited forth with the explosive power of a small volcano, and falling in a continual shower as thick, constant, and, had it not been mixed with the crash of the fall, as loud as a heavy fire of infantry; they bounded and leaped in the

course by their supremacy. When the escaped stream is feeble, it steals quietly away down the steepest part of the slope; that is to say, close under the promontory, at *i*. If it is stronger, the impetus from the hill above shoots it farther out, in the line *k*; if stronger still, at *l*; in each case it curves gradually round as it loses its onward force,

basin of the fall like hailstones in a thunder-shower. As we watched the fall it seemed convulsively to diminish, and suddenly showed, as it shortened, the rock underneath it, which I could hardly see yesterday: as I cried out to Joseph it rose again, higher than ever, and continued to rise, till it all but reached the snow on the rock opposite. It then became very fantastic and variable, increasing and diminishing in the space of two or three seconds, and partially changing its direction. After watching it for half an hour or so, I determined to try and make some memoranda. Coutet brought me up a jug of water: I stooped to dip my brush, when Coutet caught my arm, saying, 'Tenez;' at the same instant I heard a blow, like the going off of a heavy gun, two or three miles away; I looked up, and as I did, the cascade sank before my eyes, and fell back to the rock. Neither of us spoke for an instant or two; then Coutet said, 'C'est une pierre, qui est logée dans le creux,' or words to that effect: in fact, he had seen the stone come down as he called to me. I thought also that nothing more had happened, and watched the destroyed fall only with interest, until, as suddenly as it had fallen, it rose again, though not to its former height; and Coutet, stooping down, exclaimed 'Ce n'est pas c'a, le roc est percé;' in effect, a hole was now distinctly visible in the cup which turned the stream, through which the water whizzed as from a burst pipe. The cascade, however, continued to increase, until this new channel was concealed, and I was maintaining to Coutet that he must have been mistaken (and that the water only *struck* on the outer rock, having changed its mode of fall above), when again it fell; and the two girls, who had come up from the châlet, expressed their opinion at once, that the 'cascade est finie.' This time all was plain; the water gushed in a violent jet d'eau through the new aperture, hardly any of it escaping above. It rose again gradually, as the hole was choked with stones, and again fell; but presently sprang out almost to its first elevation (the water being by this time in much less body), and retained very nearly the form it had yesterday, until I got tired of looking at it, and went down to the little châlet, and sat down before its door. I had not been there five minutes before the cascade fell, and rose no more."

and falls more and more languidly to leeward, down the slope of the débris.

r s. A line which, perhaps, would be more properly termed of limitation than of escape, being that of the base or termination of the heap of torrent débris, which in shape corresponds exactly to the curved lip of a wave, after it has broken, as it slowly stops upon a shallow shore. Within this line the ground is entirely composed of heaps of stones, cemented by granite dust and cushioned with moss, while outside of it, all is smooth pasture. The pines enjoy the stony ground particularly, and hold large meetings upon it, but the alders are shy of it; and, when it has come to an end, form a triumphal procession all round its edge, following the concave line. The correspondent curves above are caused by similar lines in which the débris has formerly stopped.

§ 31. I found it a matter of the greatest difficulty to investigate the picturesque characters of these lines of projection and escape, because, as presented to the eye, they are always modified by perspective; and it is almost a physical impossibility to get a true profile of any of the slopes, they round and melt so constantly into one another. Many of them, roughly measured, are nearly circular in tendency;* but I believe they are all portions of infinite curves either modified by the concealment or destruction of the lower lips of débris, or by their junction with straight lines of slope above, throw-

* It might be thought at first that the line to which such curves would approximate would be the cycloid, as the line of quickest descent. But in reality the contour is modified by perpetual sliding of the débris under the influence of rain; and by the bounding of detached fragments with continually increased momentum. I was quite unable to get at anything like the expression of a constant law among the examples I studied in the Alps, except only the great laws of delicacy and changefulness in all curves whatsoever.

ing the longest limb of the curve upwards. Fig. 1, in Plate 46 opposite, is a simple but complete example from Chamouni; the various overlapping and concave lines at the bottom being the limits of the mass at various periods, more or less broken afterwards by the peasants, either by removing stones for building, or throwing them back at the edges here and there, out of the way of the plough; but even with all these breaks, their natural unity is so sweet and perfect, that, if the reader will turn the plate upside down, he will see I have no difficulty (merely adding a quill or two) in turning them into a bird's wing (Fig. 2), a little ruffled indeed, but still graceful, and not of such a form as one would have supposed likely to be designed and drawn, as indeed it was, by the rage of a torrent.

But we saw in Chap. VII. § 10 that this very rage was, in fact, a beneficent power,—creative, not destructive; and as all its apparent cruelty is overruled by the law of love, so all its apparent disorder is overruled by the law of loveliness: the hand of God, leading the wrath of the torrent to minister to the life of mankind, guides also its grim surges by the laws of their delight; and bridles the bounding rocks, and appeases the flying foam, till they lie down in the same lines that lead forth the fibres of the down on a cygnet's breast.

§ 32. The straight slopes with which these curves unite themselves below, in Plate 33 (*f g* in reference figure), are those spoken of in the outset as lines of rest. But I defer to the next chapter the examination of these, which are a separate family of lines (not curves at all), in order to reassemble the conclusions we have now obtained respecting *curvature* in mountains, and apply them to questions of art.

And, first, it is of course not to be supposed that these symmetrical laws are so manifest in their operation as to force themselves on the observance of men in general

PLATE XLVI.—DEBRIS CURVATURE.

PLATE XLVII.—THE BUTTRESSES OF AN ALP.

They are interrupted, necessarily, by every fantastic accident in the original conformation of the hills, which, according to the hardness of their rocks, more or less accept or refuse the authority of general law. Still, the farther we extend our observance of hills, the more we shall be struck by the continual roundness and softness which it seems the object of nature to give to every form; so that, when crags look sharp and distorted, it is not so much that they are unrounded, as that the various curves are more subtly accommodated to the angles, and that, instead of being worn into one sweeping and smooth descent, like the surface of a knoll or down, the rock is wrought into innumerable minor undulations, its own fine anatomy showing through all.

§ 33. Perhaps the mountain which I have drawn on the opposite page (Plate 47 *) is, in its original sternness of mass, and in the complexity of lines into which it has been chiselled, as characteristic an instance as could be given by way of general type. It is one of no name or popular interest, but of singular importance in the geography of Switzerland, being the angle buttress of the great northern chain of the Alps (the chain of the Jungfrau and Gemmi), and forming the promontory round which the Rhone turns to the north-west, at Martigny. It is composed of an intensely hard gneiss (slaty crystalline), in which the plates of mica are set for the most part against the angle, running nearly north and south, as in Fig. 105, and giving the point, therefore, the utmost possible strength, which, however, cannot prevent it from being rent gradually by enormous curved fissures, and separated into huge vertical flakes and chasms, just at the lower promontory, as seen in plate 47, and (in plan) in Fig. 105. The whole of the upper surface of the prom-

* I owe Mr. Le Keux sincere thanks, and not a little admiration, for the care and skill with which he has followed, on a much reduced scale, the detail of this drawing.

ontory is wrought by the old glaciers into furrows and striæ more notable than any I ever saw in the Alps.

§ 34. Now observe, we have here a piece of Nature's work, which she has assuredly been long in executing, and which is in peculiarly firm and stable material. It is in her best rock (slaty crystalline), at a point important for all her geographical purposes, and at the degree of mountain elevation especially adapted to the observation of mankind. We shall therefore probably ascertain as much of Nature's mind about these things in this piece of work as she usually allows us to see all at once.

§ 35. If the reader will take a pencil, and, laying tracing paper over the plate, follow a few of its lines, he will (unless before accustomed to accurate mountain-drawing) be soon amazed by the complexity, endlessness, and harmony of the curvatures. He will find that there is not one line in all that rock which is not an infinite curve, and united in some intricate way with others, and suggesting others unseen; and if it were the reality, instead of my drawing, which he had to deal with, he would find the infinity, in a little while, altogether overwhelm him. But even in this imperfect sketch, as he traces the multitudinous involution of flowing line, passing from swift to slight curvature, or slight to swift, at every instant, he will, I think, find enough to convince him of the truth of what has been advanced respecting the natural appointment of curvature as the first element of all loveliness in form.

Fig. 105.

§ 36. "Nay, but there are hard and straight lines mingled with those curves continually." True, as we have

said so often, just as shade is mixed with light. Angles and undulations may rise and flow continually, one through or over the other; but the opposition is in quantity nearly always all the same, if the mass is to be pleasant to the eye. In the example previously given (Plate 40), the limestone bank above Villeneuve, it is managed in a different way, but is equal in degree; the lower portion of the hill is of soft rock in thin laminæ; the upper mass is a solid and firm bed, yet not so hard as to stand all weathers. The lower portion, therefore, is rounded into almost unbroken softness of bank; the upper surmounts it as a rugged wall, and the opposition of the curve and angle is just as complete as in the first example, in which one was continually mingled with the other.

§ 37. Next, note the *quantity* in these hills. It is an element on which I shall have to insist more in speaking of vegetation; but I must not pass it by, here, since, in fact, it constitutes one of the essential differences between hills of first-rate magnificence, and inferior ones. Not that there is want of quantity even in the lower ranges, but it is a quantity of inferior things, and therefore more easily represented or suggested. On a Highland hill-side are multitudinous clusters of fern and heather; on an Alpine one, multitudinous groves of chestnut and pine. The number of the things may be the same, but the sense of infinity is in the latter case far greater, because the number is of nobler things. Indeed, so far as mere magnitude of space occupied on the field of the horizon is the measure of objects, a bank of earth ten feet high may, if we stoop to the foot of it, be made to occupy just as much of the sky as that bank of mountain at Villeneuve; nay, in many respects its little ravines and escarpments, watched with some help of imagination, may become very sufficiently representative to us of those of the great mountain; and in classing all

water-worn mountain-ground under the general and humble term of Banks, I mean to imply this relationship of structure between the smallest eminences and the highest. But in this matter of superimposed *quantity* the distinctions of rank are at once fixed. The heap of earth bears its few tufts of moss or knots of grass; the Highland or Cumberland mountain its honeyed heathers or scented ferns; but the mass of the bank at Martigny or Villeneuve has a vineyard in every cranny of its rocks, and a chestnut grove on every crest of them.

§ 38. This is no poetical exaggeration. Look close into that Plate (47). Every little circular stroke in it among the rocks means, not a clump of copse nor wreath of fern, but a walnut tree, or a Spanish chestnut, fifty or sixty feet high. Nor are the little curves, thus significative of trees, laid on at random. They are not indeed counted, tree by tree, but they are most carefully distributed in the true proportion and quantity; or if I have erred at all, it was, from mere fatigue, on the side of sparingness. The minute mounds and furrows scattered up the side of that great promontory, when they are actually approached, after three or four hours' climbing, turn into independent hills with true *parks* of lovely pasture land enclosed among them, and avenue after avenue of chestnuts, walnuts, and pines bending round their bases; while in the deeper dingles, unseen in the drawing, nestle populous villages, literally bound down to the rock by enormous trunks of vine, which, first trained lightly over the loose stone roofs, have in process of years cast their fruitful net over the whole village, and fastened it to the ground under their purple weight and wayward coils, as securely as ever human heart was fastened to earth by the net of the Flatterer.

§ 39. And it is this very richness of incident and detail which renders Switzerland so little attractive in its

subjects to the ordinary artist. Observe, this study of mine in Plate 47 does not profess to be a *picture* at all. It is a mere sketch or catalogue of all that there is on the mountain side, faithfully written out, but no more than should be put down by any conscientious painter for mere guidance, before he begins his work, properly so called; and in finishing such a subject no trickery nor short-hand is of any avail whatsoever; there are a certain number of trees to be drawn; and drawn they must be, or the place will not bear its proper character. They are not misty wreaths of soft wood suggestible by a sweep or two of the brush; but arranged and lovely clusters of trees, clear in the mountain sunlight, each specially grouped and as little admitting any carelessness of treatment, though five miles distant, as if they were within a few yards of us; the whole meaning and power of the scene being involved in that one fact of quantity. It is not large merely by multitudes of tons of rock,—the number of tons is not measurable; it is not large by elevation of angle on the horizon,—a house-roof near us rises higher; it is not large by faintness of aerial perspective,—in a clear day it often looks as if we could touch the summit with the hand. But it is large by this one unescapable fact that, from the summit to the base of it, there are of timber trees so many countable thousands. The scene differs from subjects not Swiss by including hundreds of other scenes within itself, and is mighty, not by scale, but by aggregation.

§ 40. And this is more especially and humiliatingly true of pine forest. Nearly all other kinds of wood may be reduced, over large spaces, to undetailed masses; but there is nothing but patience for pines; and this has been one of the principal reasons why artists call Switzerland "unpicturesque." There may perhaps be, in the space of a Swiss valley which comes into a pict-

ure, from five to ten millions of well grown pines.* Every one of these pines must be drawn before the scene can be. And a pine cannot be represented by a round stroke, nor by an upright one, nor even by an angular one; no conventionalism will express a pine: it must be legitimately drawn, with a light side and a dark side, and a soft gradation from the top downwards, or it does not look like a pine at all. Most artists think it not desirable to choose a subject which involves the drawing of ten millions of trees; because, supposing they could even do four or five in a minute, and worked for ten hours a day, their picture would still take them ten years before they had finished its pine forests. For this, and other similar reasons, it is declared usually that Switzerland is ugly and unpicturesque; but that is not so; it is only that *we* cannot paint it. If we could, it would be as interesting on the canvas as it is in reality; and a painter of fruit and flowers might just as well call a human figure unpicturesque, because it was to him unmanageable, as the ordinary landscape-effect painter speak in depreciation of the Alps.

§ 41. It is not probable that any subjects such as we have just been describing, involving a necessity of ten years' labor, will be executed by the modern landscape school,—at least, until its Pre-Raphaelitic tendencies become much more developed than they are yet; nor was it desirable that they should have been by Turner, whose fruitful invention would have been unwisely arrested for a length of time on any single subject, however beautiful. But with his usual certainty of perception he fastened at once on this character of "quantity," as the thing to be expressed, in one way

* Allow ten feet square for average space to each pine; suppose the valley seen only for five miles of its length, and the pine district two miles broad on each side—a low estimate of breadth also: this would give five millions.

or another, in all grand mountain-drawing; and the subjects of his on which I have chiefly dwelt in the First Volume (chapter on the Inferior Mountains, § 16, &c.) are distinguished from the work of other painters in nothing so much as in this redundance. Beautiful as they are in color, graceful in fancy, powerful in execution,—in none of these things do they stand so much alone as in plain, calculable quantity; he having always on the average twenty trees or rocks where other people have only one, and winning his victories not more by skill of generalship than by overwhelming numerical superiority.

§ 42. I say his works are distinguished in this more than in anything else, not because this is their highest quality, but because it is peculiar to them. Invention, color, grace of arrangement, we may find in Tintoret and Veronese in various manifestation; but the expression of the infinite redundance of natural landscape had never been attempted until Turner's time; and the treatment of the masses of mountain in the Daphne and Leucippus, Golden Bough, and Modern Italy, is wholly without precursorship in art.

Nor, observe, do I insist upon this quantity *merely* as arithmetical, or as if it were producible by repetition of similar things. It would be easy to be redundant, if multiplication of the same idea constituted fulness; and since Turner first introduced these types of landscape, myriads of vulgar imitations of them have been produced, whose perpetrators have supposed themselves disciples or rivals of Turner, in covering their hills with white dots for forest, and their foregrounds with yellow sparklings for herbage. But the Turnerian redundance is never monotonous. Of the thousands of groups of touches which, with him, are necessary to constitute a single bank of hill, not one but has some special character, and is as much a separate invention as the whole

plan of the picture. Perhaps this may be sufficiently understood by an attentive examination of the detail introduced by him in his St. Gothard subject, as shown in Plate 37.

§ 43. I do not, indeed, know if the examples I have given from natural scenes, though they are as characteristic as I could well choose, are enough to accustom the reader to the character of true mountain lines, and to enable him to recognize such lines in other instances; but if not, at all events they may serve to elucidate the main points, and guide to more complete examination of the subject, if it interests him, among the hills themselves. And if, after he has pursued the inquiry long enough to feel the certitude of the laws which I have been endeavoring to illustrate, he turns back again to art, I am well assured it will be with a strange recognition of unconceived excellence, and a newly quickened pleasure in the unforeseen fidelity, that he will trace the pencilling of Turner upon his hill drawings. I do not choose to spend, in this work, the labor and time which would be necessary to analyze, as I have done the drawing of the St. Gothard, any other of Turner's important mountain designs; for the reader must feel the disadvantage they are under in being either reduced in scale, or divided into fragments: and therefore these chapters are always to be considered merely as memoranda for reference before the pictures which the reader may have it in his power to examine. But this one drawing of the St. Gothard, as it has already elucidated for us Turner's knowledge of crest structure, will be found no less wonderful in the fulness with which it illustrates his perception of the lower aqueous and other curvatures. If the reader will look back to the etching of the entire subject, Plate 21, he will now discern, I believe, without the necessity of my lettering them for him, the lines of fall, rounded down from the

crests until they plunge into the overhanging precipices; the lines of projection, where the fallen stones extend the long concave sweep from the couloir, pushing the torrent against the bank on the other side; in the opening of the ravine he will perceive the oblique and parallel inclination of its sides, following the cleavage of the beds in the diagonal line A B of the reference figure; and, finally, in the great slope and precipice on the right of it, he will recognize one of the grandest types of the peculiar mountain mass which Turner always chose by preference to illustrate, the "slope above wall" of *d* in Fig. 13, p. 192; compare also the last chapter, §§ 26, 27. It will be seen, by reference to my sketch of the spot, Plate 20, that this conformation does actually exist there with great definiteness: Turner has only enlarged and thrown it into more numerous alternations of light and shade. As these could not be shown in the etching, I have given, in the frontispiece, this passage nearly of its real size: the exquisite grays and blues by which Turner has rounded and thrown it back are necessarily lost in the plate; but the grandeur of his simple cliff and soft curves of sloping bank above is in some degree rendered.

We must yet dwell for a moment on the detail of the rocks on the left in Plate 37, as they approach nearer the eye, turning at the same time from the light. It cost me trouble to etch this passage, and yet half its refinements are still missed; for Turner has put his whole strength into it, and wrought out the curving of the gneiss beds with a subtlety which could not be at all approached in the time I had to spare for this plate. Enough, however, is expressed to illustrate the points in question.

§ 44. We have first, observe, a rounded bank, broken, at its edges, into cleavages by inclined beds. I thought it would be well, lest the reader should think I dwell

too much on this particular scene, to give an instance of similar structure from another spot; and therefore I daguerreotyped the cleavages of a slope of gneiss just above the Cascade des Pélerins, Chamouni, corresponding in position to this bank of Turner's. Plate 49 (facing p. 376), copied by Mr. Armytage from the daguerreotype, represents, necessarily in a quite unprejudiced and impartial way, the structure at present in question; and the reader may form a sufficient idea, from this plate, of the complexity of descending curve and foliated rent, in even a small piece of mountain foreground,* where the gneiss beds are tolerably continuous. But Turner had to add to such general complexity the expression of a more than ordinary undulation in the beds of the St. Gothard gneiss.

§ 45. If the reader will look back to Chapter II. § 13, he will find it stated that this scene is approached out of the defile of Dazio Grande, of which the impression was still strong on Turner's mind, and where only he could see, close at hand, the nature of the rocks in a good section. It most luckily happens that De Saussure was interested by the rocks at the same spot, and has given the following account of them, Voyages, §§ 1801, 1802:—

"À une lieue de Faïdo, l'on passe le Tésin pour le repasser bientôt après [see the old bridge in Turner's view, carried away in mine], et l'on trouve sur sa rive droite des couches d'une roche feuilletée, qui montent du côté du Nord.

"On voit clairement que depuis que les granits veinés ont été remplacés par des pierres moins solides, tantôt les rochers se sont éboulés et ont été recouverts par la terre végétale, tantôt leur situation primitive a subi des changements irréguliers.

* The white spots on the brow of the little cliff are lichens, only four or five inches broad.

"§ 1802. Mais bientôt après, *on monte par un chemin en corniche au dessus du Tésin, qui se précipite entre des rochers avec la plus grande violence.* Ces rochers sont là si serrés, qu'il n'y a de place que pour la rivière et pour le chemin, et même en quelques endroits, celui-ci est entièrement pris sur le roc. Je fis à pied cette montée, pour examiner avec soin ces beaux rochers, *dignes de toute l'attention d'un amateur.*

"Les veines de ce granit forment en plusieurs endroits des *zigzags redoublés*, precisément comme ces anciennes tapisseries, connues sous le nom de points d'Hongrie; et là on ne peut pas prononcer, si les veines de la pierre, sont ou ne sont pas parallèles à ses couches. Cependant ces veines reprennent aussi dans quelques places, une direction constante, et cette direction est bien la même que celle des couches. Il paroît même qu'en divers endroits, où ces veines ont la forme d'un *sigma* ou d'une M couchée ⋚, ce sont les grandes jambes du *sigma*, qui ont la direction des couches. Enfin, j'observai plusieurs couches, qui dans le milieu de leur épaisseur paroissoient remplies de ces veines en zigzag, tandis qu'auprès de leurs bords, on les voyoit toutes en lignes droites."

§ 46. If the reader will now examine Turner's work at the point *x* in the reference figure, and again on the stones in the foreground, comparing it finally with the fragment of the rocks which happened fortunately to come into my foreground in Plate 20, rising towards the left, and of which I have etched the structure with some care, though at the time I had quite forgotten Saussure's notice of the peculiar M-shaped zigzags of the gneiss at the spot, I believe he will have enough evidence before him, taken all in all, to convince him of Turner's inevitable perception, and of the entire supremacy of his mountain drawing over all that had previously existed. And if he is able to refer, even to the engravings (though I

desire always that what I state should be *tested* by the drawings only) of any others of his elaborate hill-subjects, and will examine their details with careful reference to the laws explained in this chapter, he will find that the Turnerian promontories and banks are always simply *right*, and that in all respects; that their gradated curvatures, and nodding cliffs, and redundant sequence of folded glen and feathery glade, are, in all their seemingly fanciful beauty, literally the most downright plain-speaking that has as yet been uttered about hills; and differ from all antecedent work, not in being ideal, but in being, so to speak, pictorial *casts* of the ground. Such a drawing as that of the Yorkshire Richmond, looking down the river, in the England Series, is even better than a model of the ground, because it gives the aerial perspective, and is better than a photograph of the ground, because it exaggerates no shadows, while it unites the veracities both of model and photograph.

§ 47. Nor let it be thought that it was an easy or creditable thing to treat mountain ground with this faithfulness in the days when Turner executed those drawings. In the Encyclopædia Britannica (Edinburgh, 1797), under article "Drawing," the following are the directions given for the production of a landscape:—

"If he is to draw a landscape from nature, let him take his station on a rising ground, where he will have a large horizon, and mark his tablet into three divisions, downwards from top to the bottom; and divide in his own mind the landscape he is to take into three divisions also. Then let him turn his face directly opposite to the midst of the horizon, keeping his body fixed, and draw what is directly before his eyes upon the middle division of the tablet: then *turn his head, but not his body*,* to the left hand and delineate what he views

* What a *comfortable*, as well as intelligent, operation, sketching from nature must have been in those days!

there, joining it properly to what he had done before; and, lastly, do the same by what is to be seen upon his right hand, laying down everything exactly, both with respect to distance and proportion. One example is given in plate clxviii.

"The best artists of late, in drawing their landscapes, make them shoot away, one part lower than another. Those who make their landscapes mount up higher and higher, as if they stood at the bottom of a hill to take the prospect, commit a great error; the best way is to get upon a rising ground, make the nearest objects in the piece the highest, and those that are farther off to shoot away lower and lower till they come almost level with the line of the horizon, lessening everything proportionably to its distance, and observing also to make the objects fainter and less distinct the farther they are removed from the eye. He must make all his lights and shades fall one way, and let everything have its proper motion: as trees shaken by the wind, the small boughs bending more and the large ones less; water agitated by the wind, and dashing against ships or boats, or falling from a precipice upon rocks and stones, and spirting up again into the air, and sprinkling all about; clouds also in the air now gathered with the winds; now violently condensed into hail, rain, and the like,—always remembering, that whatever motions are caused by the wind must be made all to move the same way, because the wind can blow but one way at once."

Such was the state of the public mind, and of public instruction, at the time when Claude, Poussin, and Salvator were in the zenith of their reputation; such were the precepts which, even to the close of the century, it was necessary for a young painter to comply with during the best part of the years he gave to study. Take up one of Turner's views of our Yorkshire dells, seen from about a hawk's height of pause above the sweep

of its river, and with it in your hand, side by side with the old Encyclopædia paragraph, consider what must have been the man's strength, who, on a sudden, passed from such precept to such practice.

§ 48. On a sudden it was; for, even yet a youth, and retaining profound respect for all older artists' ways of *work*, he followed his own will fearlessly in choice of *scene;* and already in the earliest of his coast drawings there are as daring and strange decisions touching the site of the spectator as in his latest works; lookings down and up into coves and clouds, as defiant of all former theories touching possible perspective, or graceful componence of subject, as, a few years later, his system of color was of the theory of the brown tree. Nor was the step remarkable merely for its magnitude,—for the amount of progress made in a few years. It was much more notable by its direction. The discovery of the true structure of hill banks had to be made by Turner, not merely in *advance* of the men of his day, but in *contradiction* to them. Examine the works of contemporary and preceding landscapists, and it will be found that the universal practice is to make the tops of all cliffs broken and rugged, their bases smooth and soft, or concealed with wood. No one had ever observed the contrary structure, the bank rounded at the top, and broken on the flank. And yet all the hills of any importance which are met with throughout Lowland Europe are, properly speaking, high banks, for the most part following the courses of rivers, and forming a step from the high ground, of which the country generally consists, to the river level. Thus almost the whole of France, though, on the face of it, flat, is raised from 300 to 500 feet above the level of the sea, and is traversed by valleys either formed by, or directing, the course of its great rivers. In these valleys lie all its principal towns, surrounded, almost without exception,

by ranges of hills covered with wood or vineyard. Ascending these hills, we find ourselves at once in an elevated plain, covered with corn and lines of apple trees, extending to the next river side, where we come to the brow of another hill, and descend to the city and valley beneath it. Our own valleys in Northumberland, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Devonshire, are cut in the same manner through vast extents of elevated land; the scenery which interests the traveller chiefly, as he passes through even the most broken parts of those counties, being simply that of the high *banks* which rise from the shores of the Dart or the Derwent, the Wharfe or the Tees. In all cases, when these banks are surmounted, the sensation is one of disappointment, as the adventurer finds himself, the moment he has left the edge of the ravine, in a waste of softly undulating moor or arable land, hardly deserving the title of hill country. As we advance into the upper districts the fact remains still the same, although the banks to be climbed are higher, the ravines grander, and the intermediate land more broken. The majesty of an isolated peak is still comparatively rare, and nearly all the most interesting pieces of scenery are glens or passes, which, if seen from a height great enough to command them in all their relations, would be found in reality little more than trenches excavated through broad masses of elevated land, and expanding at intervals into the wide basins which are occupied by the glittering lake or smiling plain.

§ 49. All these facts had been entirely ignored by artists; nay, almost by geologists, before Turner's time. He saw them at once; fathomed them to the uttermost, and, partly owing to early association, partly, perhaps, to the natural pleasure of working a new mine discovered by himself, devoted his best powers to their illustration, passing by with somewhat less attention the

conditions of broken-summited rock, which had previously been the only ones known. And if we now look back to his treatment of the crest of Mont Pilate, in the figure given at the close of the last chapter, we shall understand better the nature and strength of the in-

Fig. 106.

stinct which compelled him to sacrifice the peaked summit, and to bring the whole mountain within a lower enclosing line. In that figure, however, the dotted peak interferes with the perception of the form finally determined upon, which therefore I repeat here (Fig. 106), as Turner gave it in color. The eye may not at first detect the law of ascent in the peaks, but if the height of any one of them were altered, the general form would instantly be perceived to be less agreeable. Fig. 107

Fig. 107.

shows that they are disposed within an infinite curve, A *c*, from which the last crag falls a little to conceal the law, while the terminal line at the other extremity, A *b*, is a minor echo of the whole contour.

§ 50. I must pause to make one exception to my general statement that this structure had been entirely

PLATE XLVIII.—THE QUARRIES OF CARRARA.

ignored. The reader was, perhaps, surprised by the importance I attached to the fragment of mountain background by Masaccio, given in Plate 13 of the third volume. If he looks back to it now, his surprise will be less. It was a complete recognition of the laws of the lines of aqueous sculpture, asserted as Turner's was, in the boldest opposition to the principles of rock drawing of the time. It presents even smoother and broader masses than any which I have shown as types of hill form; but it must be remembered that Masaccio had seen only the softer contours of the Apennine limestone. I have no memorandum by me of the hill lines near Florence; but Plate 48 shows the development of limestone structure, at a spot which has, I think, the best right to be given as an example of the Italian hills, the head of the valley of Carrara. The white scar on the hill side is the principal quarry; and the peaks above deserve observation, not so much for anything in their forms, as for the singular barrenness which was noted in the fifteenth chapter of the last volume (§ 8) as too often occurring in the Apennines. Compare this plate with the previous one. The peak drawn in Plate 47 rises at least 7,500 feet above the sea,—yet is wooded to its top; this Carrara crag not above 5,000,*—yet it is wholly barren.

§ 51. Masaccio, however, as we saw, was taken away by death before he could give any one of his thoughts complete expression. Turner was spared to do *his* work, in this respect at least, completely. It might be thought that, having had such adverse influence to struggle with, he would prevail against it but in part; and, though showing the way to much that was new, retain of necessity some old prejudices, and leave his successors to pursue in pure liberty, and with happier

* It is not one of the highest points of the Carrara chain. The chief summits are much more jagged, and very noble. See Chap. XX. § 20.

power, the path he had pointed out. But it was not so: he did the work so completely on the ground which he chose to illustrate, that nothing is left for future artists to accomplish in that kind. Some classes of scenery, as often pointed out in the preceding pages, he was unfamiliar with, or held in little affection, and out of that scenery, untouched by him, new motives may be obtained; but of such landscape as his favorite Yorkshire Wolds, and banks of Rhenish and French hill, and rocky mountains of Switzerland, like the St. Gothard, already so long dwelt upon, he has expressed the power in what I believe to be forever a central and unmatchable way. I do not say this with positiveness, because it is not demonstrable. Turner may be beaten on his own ground—so may Tintoret, so may Shakspeare, Dante, or Homer: but my *belief* is that all these first-rate men are lonely men; that the particular work they did was by them done forever in the best way; and that this work done by Turner among the hills, joining the most intense appreciation of all tenderness with delight in all magnitude, and memory for all detail, is never to be rivalled, or looked upon in similitude again.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RESULTING FORMS:—FIFTHLY, STONES.

§ 1. It is somewhat singular that the indistinctness of treatment which has been so often noticed as characteristic of our present art shows itself always most when there is least apparent reason for it. Modern artists, having some true sympathy with what is vague in nature, draw all that is uncertain and evasive without evasion, and render faithfully whatever can be discerned in faithless mist or mocking vapors; but having no sympathy with what is solid and serene, they seem to become uncertain themselves in proportion to the certainty of what they see; and while they render flakes of far-away cloud, or fringes of inextricable forest, with something like patience and fidelity, give nothing but the hastiest indication of the ground they can tread upon or touch. It is only in modern art that we find any complete representation of clouds, and only in ancient art that, generally speaking, we find any careful realization of Stones.

§ 2. This is all the more strange, because, as we saw some time back, the *ruggedness* of the stone is more pleasing to the modern than the mediæval, and he rarely completes any picture satisfactorily to himself unless large spaces of it are filled with irregular masonry, rocky banks, or shingly shores: whereas the mediæval could conceive no desirableness in the loose and unhewn masses; associated them generally in his mind with wicked men, and the Martyrdom of St. Stephen; and

always threw them out of his road, or garden, to the best of his power.

Yet with all this difference in predilection, such was the honesty of the mediæval, and so firm his acknowledgment of the necessity to paint completely whatever was to be painted at all, that there is hardly a strip of earth under the feet of a saint, in any finished work of the early painters, but more, and better painted, stones are to be found upon it than in an entire exhibition full of modern mountain scenery.

§ 3. Not better painted in every respect. In those interesting and popular treatises on the art of drawing, which tell the public that their colors should neither be too warm nor too cold, and that their touches should always be characteristic of the object they are intended to represent, the directions given for the manufacture of stones usually enforce "crispness of outline" and "roughness of texture." And, accordingly, in certain expressions of frangibility, irregular accumulation, and easy resting of one block upon another, together with some conditions of lichenous or mossy texture, modern stone-painting is far beyond the ancient; for these are just the characters which first strike the eye, and enable the foreground to maintain its picturesque influence, without inviting careful examination. The mediæval painter, on the other hand, not caring for this picturesque general effect, nor being in anywise familiar with mountain scenery, perceived in stones, when he was forced to paint them, eminently the characters which they had in common with figures; that is to say, their curved outlines, rounded surfaces, and varieties of delicate color, and, accordingly, was somewhat too apt to lose their angular and fragmentary character in a series of muscular lines resembling those of an anatomical preparation; for, although in large rocks the cleavable or frangible nature was the thing that necessarily struck him most,

the pebbles under his feet were apt to be oval or rounded in the localities of almost all the important schools of Italy. In Lombardy, the mass of the ground is composed of nothing but Alpine gravel, consisting of rolled oval pebbles, on the average about six inches long by four wide — awkward building materials, yet used in ingenious alternation with the bricks in all the lowland Italian fortresses. Besides this universal rotundity, the qualities of stones which rendered them valuable to the lapidary were forced on the painter's attention by the familiar arts of inlaying and mosaic. Hence, in looking at a pebble, his mind was divided between its roundness and its veins; and Leonardo covers the shelves of rock under the feet of St. Anne with variegated agates; while Mantegna often strews the small stones about his mountain caves in a polished profusion, as if some repentant martyr princess had been just scattering her caskets of pearls into the dust.

§ 4. Some years ago, as I was talking of the curvilinear forms in a piece of rock to one of our academicians, he said to me, in a somewhat despondent accent, "If you look for curves, you will see curves; if you look for angles, you will see angles."

The saying appeared to me an infinitely sad one. It was the utterance of an experienced man; and in many ways true, for one of the most singular gifts, or, if abused, most singular weaknesses, of the human mind is its power of persuading itself to see whatever it chooses;—a great gift, if directed to the discernment of the things needful and pertinent to its own work and being; a great weakness, if directed to the discovery of things profitless or discouraging. In all things throughout the world, the men who look for the crooked will see the crooked, and the men who look for the straight will see the straight. But yet the saying was a notably sad one; for it came of the conviction in the speaker's mind that there was in

reality *no* crooked and *no* straight; that all so-called discernment was fancy, and that men might, with equal rectitude of judgment, and good-deserving of their fellow-men, perceive and paint whatever was convenient to them.

§ 5. Whereas things may always be seen truly by candid people, though never *completely*. No human capacity ever yet saw the whole of a thing; but we may see more and more of it the longer we look. Every individual temper will see something different in it: but supposing the tempers honest, all the differences are there. Every advance in our acuteness of perception will show us something new; but the old and first discerned thing will still be there, not falsified, only modified and enriched by the new perceptions, becoming continually more beautiful in its harmony with them and more approved as a part of the Infinite truth.

§ 6. There are no natural objects out of which more can be thus learned than out of stones. They seem to have been created especially to reward a patient observer. Nearly all other objects in nature can be seen, to some extent, without patience, and are pleasant even in being half seen. Trees, clouds, and rivers are enjoyable even by the careless; but the stone under his foot has for carelessness nothing in it but stumbling: no pleasure is languidly to be had out of it, nor food, nor good of any kind; nothing but symbolism of the hard heart and the unfatherly gift. And yet, do but give it some reverence and watchfulness, and there is bread of thought in it, more than in any other lowly feature of all the landscape.

§ 7. For a stone, when it is examined, will be found a mountain in miniature. The fineness of Nature's work is so great, that, into a single block, a foot or two in diameter, she can compress as many changes of form and structure, on a small scale, as she needs for her moun-

PLATE XLIX.—BANK OF SLATY CRYSTALLINES.

tains on a large one; and, taking moss for forests, and grains of crystal for crags, the surface of a stone, in by far the plurality of instances, is more interesting than the surface of an ordinary hill; more fantastic in form and incomparably richer in color,—the last quality being, in fact, so noble in most stones of good birth (that is to say, fallen from the crystalline mountain ranges), that I shall be less able to illustrate this part of my subject satisfactorily by means of engraving than perhaps any other, except the color of skies. I say, *shall* be less able, because the beauty of stone surface is in so great a degree dependent on the mosses and lichens which root themselves upon it, that I must place my richest examples in the section on vegetation. For instance, in the plate opposite, though the mass of rock is large and somewhat distant, the effect of it is as much owing to the white spots of silvery lichen in the centre and left, and to the flowing lines in which the darker mosses, growing in the cranny, have arranged themselves beyond, as to the character of the rock itself; nor could the beauty of the whole mass be explained, if we were to approach the least nearer, without more detailed drawing of this vegetation. For the present I shall only give a few examples of the drawing of stones roughly broken, or worn so as not to be materially affected by vegetation.

§ 8. We have already seen an example of Titian's treatment of mountain crests as compared with Turner's; here is a parallel instance, from Titian, of stones in the bed of a torrent (Fig. 108), in many ways good and right, and expressing in its writhed and variously broken lines far more of real stone structure than the common water-color dash of the moderns. Observe, especially, how Titian has understood that the fracture of the stone more or less depends on the undulating grain of its crystalline structure, following the cavity of the

largest stone in the middle of the figure, with concentric lines; and compare in Plate 21 the top of Turner's largest stones on the left.

§ 9. If the reader sees nothing in this drawing (Fig. 108) that he can like,—although, indeed, I would have

Fig. 108.

him prefer the work of Turner,—let him be assured that he does not yet understand on what Titian's reputation is founded. No painter's name is oftener in the mouth of the ordinary connoisseur, and no painter was ever less understood. His power of color is indeed perfect, but so is Bonifazio's. Titian's *supremacy* above all the other Venetians, except Tintoret and Veronese, consists in the

firm truth of his portraiture, and more or less masterly understanding of the nature of stones, trees, men, or

Fig. 109.

whatever else he took in hand to paint; so that, without some correlative understanding in the spectator, Titian's work, in its highest qualities, must be utterly dead and unappealing to him.

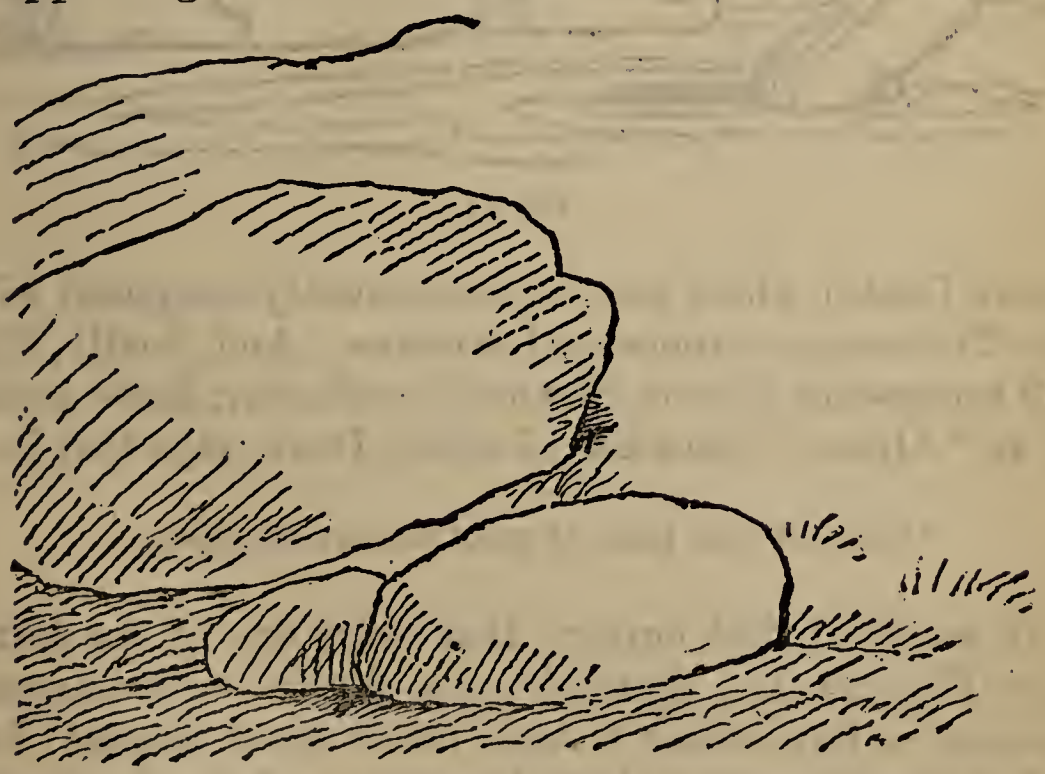


Fig. 110.

§ 10. I give one more example from the lower part of the same print (Fig. 109), in which a stone, with an eddy

round it, is nearly as well drawn as it can be in the simple method of the early wood-engraving. Perhaps the reader will feel its truth better by contrast with a fragment or two of modern Idealism. Here, for instance (Fig. 110), is a group of stones, highly entertaining in their variety of form, out of the subject of "Christian vanquishing Apollyon," in the outlines to the Pilgrim's Progress, published by the Art-Union, the idealism being here wrought to a pitch of extraordinary brilliancy by the exciting nature of the subject. Next (Fig. 111) is another poetical conception, one of Flaxman's, representing the eddies and stones of the Pool of Envy (Flax-

Fig. 111.

man's Dante), which may be conveniently compared with the Titianesque stones and streams. And, finally, Fig. 112 represents, also on Flaxman's authority, those stones of an "Alpine" character, of which Dante says that he

> "Climbed with heart of proof the adverse steep."

It seems at first curious that every one of the forms that Flaxman has chanced upon should be an impossible one—a form which a stone never could assume: but this is the Nemesis of false Idealism, and the inevitable one.

§ 11. The chief incapacity in the modern work is not,

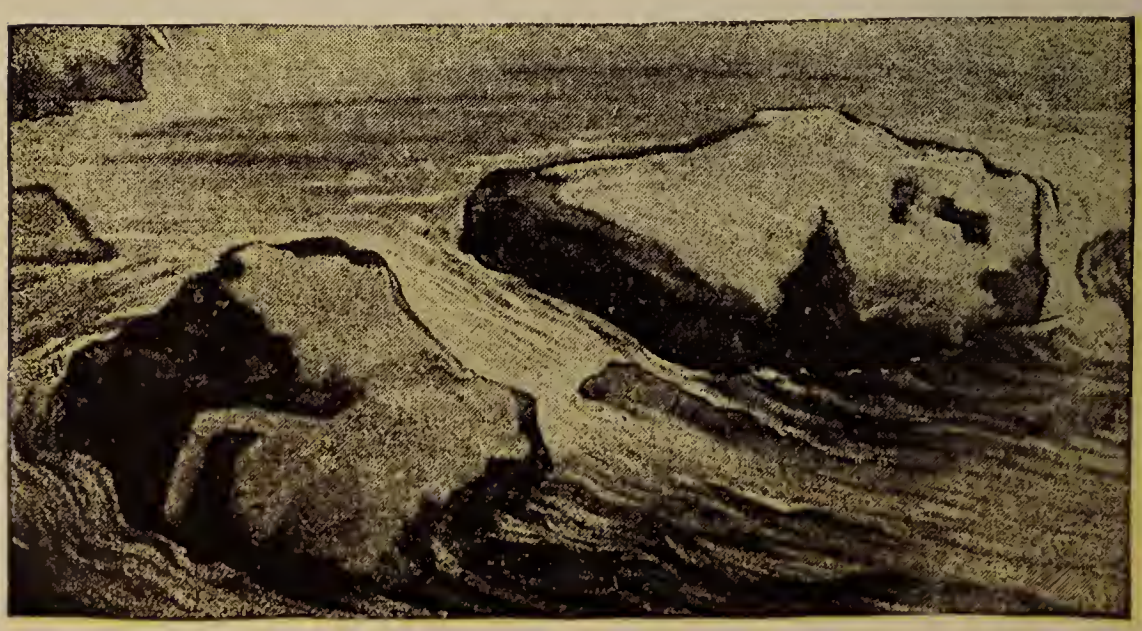


PLATE L.—TRUTH AND UNTRUTH OF STONES.

however, so much in its outline, though that is wrong enough, as in the total absence of any effort to mark the surface roundings. It is not the *outline* of a stone, how-

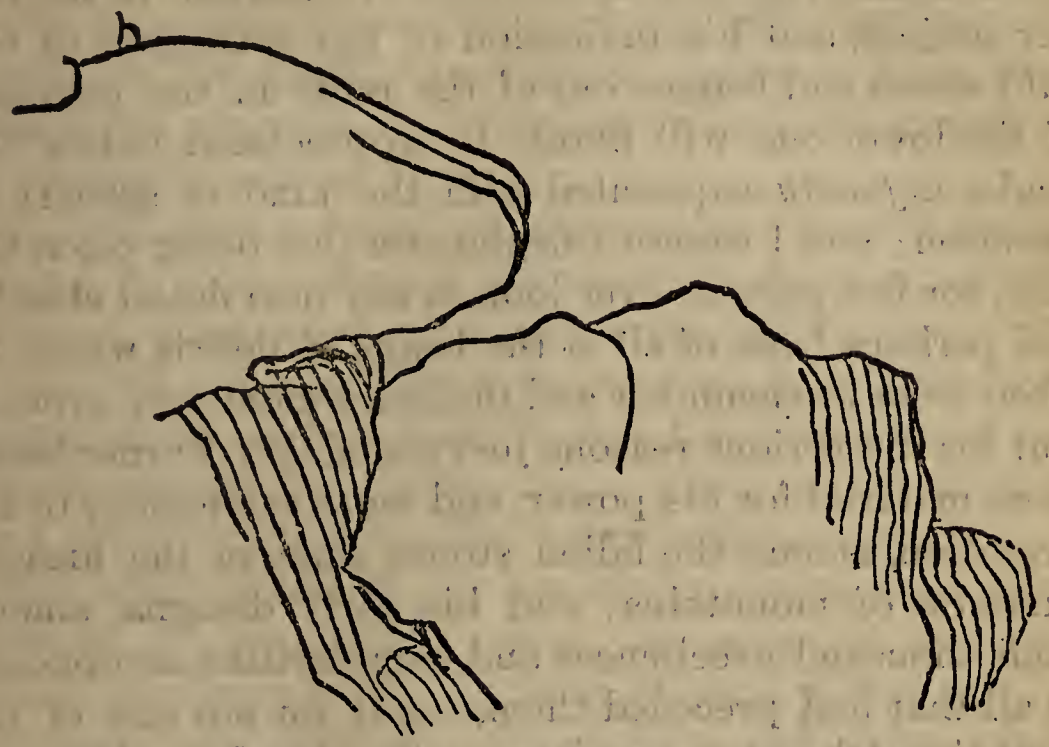


Fig. 112.

ever true, that will make it solid or heavy; it is the interior markings, and thoroughly understood perspectives of its sides. In the opposite plate the upper two subjects are by Turner, foregrounds out of the Liber Studiorum (Source of Arveron, and Ben Arthur); the lower by Claude, Liber Veritatis, No. 5. I think the reader cannot but feel that the blocks in the upper two subjects are massy and ponderous; in the lower, wholly without weight. If he examine their several treatment, he will find that Turner has perfect imaginative conception of every recess and projection over the whole surface, and *feels* the stone as he works over it; every touch, moreover, being full of tender gradation. But Claude, as he is obliged to hold to his outline in hills, so also clings to it in the stones,—cannot round them in the least, leaves their light surfaces wholly blank, and puts a few patches

of dark here and there about their edges, as chance will have it.

§ 12. Turner's way of wedging the stones of the glacier moraine together in strength of disorder, in the upper subject, and his indication of the springing of the wild stems and leafage out of the rents in the boulders of the lower one, will hardly be appreciated unless the reader is *fondly* acquainted with the kind of scenery in question; and I cannot calculate on this being often the case, for few persons ever look at any near detail closely, and perhaps least of all at the heaps of débris which so often seem to encumber and disfigure mountain ground. But for the various reasons just stated (§ 7), Turner found more material for his power, and more excitement to his invention, among the fallen stones than in the highest summits of mountains; and his early designs, among their thousand excellences and singularities, as opposed to all that had preceded them, count for not one of the least the elaborate care given to the drawing of torrent beds, shaly slopes, and other conditions of stony ground which all canons of art at the period pronounced inconsistent with dignity of composition; a convenient principle, since, of all foregrounds, one of loose stones is beyond comparison the most difficult to draw with any approach to realization. The Turnerian subjects, "Junction of the Greta and Tees" (Yorkshire Series, and illustrations to Scott); "Wycliffe, near Rokeby" (Yorkshire); "Hardraw Fall" (Yorkshire); "Ben Arthur" (Liber Studiorum); "Ulleswater," and the magnificent drawing of the "Upper Fall of the Tees" (England Series), are sufficiently illustrative of what I mean.

§ 13. It is not, however, only in their separate condition, as materials of foreground, that we have to examine the effect of stones: they form a curiously important element of distant landscape in their aggregation on a large scale.

It will be remembered that in the course of the last chapter we wholly left out of our account of mountain lines that group which was called "Lines of Rest." One reason for doing so was that, as these lines are produced by débris in a state of temporary repose, their beauty, or deformity, or whatever character they may possess, is properly to be considered as belonging to stones rather than to rocks.

§ 14. Whenever heaps of loose stones or sand are increased by the continual fall of fresh fragments from above, or diminished by their removal from below, yet not in such mass or with such momentum as entirely to disturb those already accumulated, the materials on the surface arrange themselves in an equable slope, producing a straight line of profile in the bank or cone.

The heap formed by the sand falling in an hour-glass presents, in its straight sides, the simplest result of such a condition; and any heap of sand thrown up by the spade will show the slopes here and there, interrupted only by knotty portions, held together by moisture, or agglutinated by pressure,—interruptions which cannot occur to the same extent on a large scale, unless the soil is really hardened nearly to the nature of rock. As long as it remains incoherent, every removal of substance at the bottom of the heap, or addition of it at the top, occasions a sliding disturbance of the whole slope, which smooths it into rectitude of line; and there is hardly any great mountain mass among the Alps which does not show towards its foundation perfectly regular descents of this nature, often two or three miles long without a break. Several of considerable extent are seen on the left of Plate 47.

§ 15. I call these lines of rest, because, though the bulk of the mass may be continually increasing or diminishing, the line of the profile does not change, being fixed at a certain angle by the nature of the earth. It is

usually stated carelessly as an angle of about 45°, but it never really reaches such a slope. I measured carefully the angles of a very large number of slopes of mountain in various parts of the Mont Blanc district. The few examples given in the note below are enough to exhibit the general fact that loose débris lies at various angles up to about 30° or 32°; débris protected by grass or pines may reach 35°, and rocky slopes 40° or 41°, but in continuous lines of rest I never found a steeper angle.*

§ 16. I speak of some rocky slopes as lines of rest, because, whenever a mountain side is composed of soft stone which splits and decomposes fast, it has a tendency to choke itself up with the ruins, and gradually to get abraded or ground down towards the débris slope; so that vast masses of the sides of Alpine valleys are formed by ascents of nearly uniform inclination, partly

* Small fragments of limestone, five or six inches across, and flattish, sharp, angular on edges, and quite loose; slope near fountain of Maglans . . . . . 31½°
Somewhat larger stones, nearer Maglans; quite loose . . . 31¾
Similar débris, slightly touched with vegetation 35
Débris on southern side of Maglans 33½
Slope of Montagne de la Côte, at the bottom, as seen from the village of Chamouni 40¾
Average slope of Montagne de Taconay, seen from Chamouni 38
Maximum slope of side of Breven 41
Slope of débris from ravine of Breven down to the village of Chamouni 14
Slopes of débris set with pines under Aiguille Verte, seen from Argentière 36
General slope of Tapia, from Argentière 34
Slopes of La Côte and Taconay, from Argentière . . 27¼
Profile of Breven, from near the Chapeau (a point commanding the valley of Chamouni in its truest longitude) . 32½
Average slope of Montanvert, from same point . . 39½
Slope of La Côte, same point 36½
Eastern slope of Pain de Sucre, seen from Vevay . . 33
Western " " " . . . 36½
Slope of foot of Dent de Morcles, seen from Vevay . . 38½
" " Midi " " . . 40

loose, partly of jagged rocks, which break, but do not materially alter the general line of ground. In such cases the fragments usually have accumulated without disturbance at the foot of the slope, and the pine forests fasten the soil and prevent it from being carried down in large masses. But numerous instances occur in which the mountain is consumed away gradually by its own torrents, not having strength enough to form clefts or precipices, but falling on each side of the ravines into even banks, which slide down from above as they are wasted below.

§ 17. By all these various expedients, Nature secures, in the midst of her mountain curvatures, vast series of perfectly straight lines opposing and relieving them; lines, however, which artists have almost universally agreed to alter or ignore, partly disliking them intrinsically, on account of their formality, and partly because the mind instantly associates them with the idea of mountain decay. Turner, however, saw that this very decay having its use and nobleness, the contours which were significative of it ought no more to be omitted than, in the portrait of an aged man, the furrows on his hand or brow; besides, he liked the lines themselves, for their contrast with the mountain wildness, just as he liked the straightness of sunbeams penetrating the soft waywardness of clouds. He introduced them constantly into his noblest compositions; but in order to the full understanding of their employment in the instance I am about to give, one or two more points yet need to be noticed.

§ 18. Generally speaking, the curved lines of convex *fall* belong to mountains of hard rock, over whose surfaces the fragments *bound* to the valley, and which are worn by wrath of avalanches and wildness of torrents, like that of the Cascade des Pélerins, described in the note above. Generally speaking, the straight lines of

rest belong to softer mountains, or softer surfaces and places of mountains, which, exposed to no violent wearing from external force, nevertheless keep slipping and mouldering down spontaneously or receiving gradual accession of material from incoherent masses above them.

§ 19. It follows, rather, that where the gigantic wearing forces are in operation, the stones or fragments of rock brought down by the torrents and avalanches are likely, however hard, to be rounded on all their edges; but where the straight shaly slopes are found, the stones which glide or totter down their surfaces frequently retain all their angles, and form jagged and flaky heaps at the bottom.

And farther, it is to be supposed that the rocks which are habitually subjected to these colossal forces of destruction are in their own mass firm and secure, otherwise they would long ago have given way; but that where the gliding and crumbling surfaces are found without much external violence, it is very possible that the whole framework of the mountain may be full of flaws; and a danger exist of vast portions of its mass giving way, or slipping down in heaps, as the sand suddenly yields in an hour-glass after some moments of accumulation.

§ 20. Hence, generally, in the mind of any one familiar with mountains, the conditions will be associated, on the one hand, of the curved, convex, and overhanging bank or cliff, the roaring torrent, and the rounded boulder of massive stone; and, on the other, of the straight and even slope of bank, the comparatively quiet and peaceful lapse of streams, and the sharp-edged and unworn look of the fallen stones, together with a sense of danger greater, though more occult, than in the wilder scenery.

The drawing of the St. Gothard, which we have so

PLATE LI.—GOLDAU.

laboriously analyzed, was designed, as before mentioned, from a sketch taken in the year 1843. But with it was made another drawing. Turner brought home in that year a series of sketches taken in the neighborhood of the pass; among others, one of the Valley of Goldau, covered as it is by the ruins of the Rossberg. Knowing his fondness for fallen stones, I chose this Goldau subject as a companion to the St. Gothard. The plate opposite will give some idea of the resultant drawing.

§ 21. *Some* idea only. It is a subject which, like the St. Gothard, is far too full of detail to admit of reduction; and I hope, therefore, soon to engrave it properly of its real size. It is, besides, more than usually difficult to translate this drawing into black and white, because much of the light on the clouds is distinguished merely by orange or purple color from the green grays, which, though not darker than the warm hues, have the effect of shade from their coldness, but cannot be marked as shade in the engraving without too great increase of depth. Enough, however, has been done to give some idea of the elements of Turner's design.

§ 22. Detailed accounts of the Rossberg Fall may be found in any ordinary Swiss Guide; the only points we have to notice respecting it are, that the mountain was composed of an indurated gravel, disposed in oblique beds sloping *towards* the valley. A portion of one of these beds gave way, and half filled the valley beneath, burying five villages, together with the principal one of Goldau, and partially choking up a little lake, the streamlets which supplied it now forming irregular pools among the fallen fragments. I call the rock, and accurately, indurated gravel; but the induration is so complete that the mass breaks *through* the rolled pebbles chiefly composing it, and may be considered as a true rock, only always in its blocks rugged and formless when

compared with the crystalline formations. Turner has chosen his position on some of the higher heaps of ruin, looking down towards the Lake of Zug, which is seen under the sunset, the spire of the tower of Aart on its shore just relieved against the light of the waves.

The Rossberg itself, never steep, and still more reduced in terror by the fall of a portion of it, was not available to him as a form *explanatory* of the catastrophe; and even the slopes of the Righi on the left are not, in reality, as uninterrupted in their slope as he has drawn them; but he felt the connection of this structure with the ruin amidst which he stood, and brought the long lines of danger clear against the sunset, and as straight as its own retiring rays.

§ 23. If the reader will now glance back to the St. Gothard subject, as illustrated in the two Plates 21 and 37, and compare it with this of Goldau, keeping in mind the general conclusions about the two great classes of mountain scenery which I have just stated, he will, I hope, at last cease to charge me with enthusiasm in anything that I have said of Turner's imagination, as always instinctively possessive of those truths which lie deepest, and are most essentially linked together, in the expression of a scene. I have only taken two drawings (though these of his best period) for the illustration of all the structures of the Alps which, in the course of half a volume, it has been possible for me to explain; and all my half-volume is abstracted in these two drawings, and that in the most consistent and complete way, as if they had been made on purpose to contain a perfect summary of Alpine truth.

§ 24. There are one or two points connected with them of yet more touching interest. They are the last drawings which Turner ever made with unabated power. The one of the St. Gothard, speaking with strict accuracy, is *the* last drawing; for that of Goldau, though

majestic to the utmost in conception, is less carefully finished, and shows, in the execution of parts of the sky, signs of impatience, caused by the first feeling of decline of strength. Therefore I called the St. Gothard (Vol. III. Ch. xv. § 5) the last mountain drawing he ever executed with perfect power. But the Goldau is still a noble companion to it—more solemn in thought, more sublime in color, and, in certain points of poetical treatment, especially characteristic of the master's mind in earlier days. He was very definitely in the habit of indicating the association of any subject with circumstances of death, especially the death of multitudes, by placing it under one of his most deeply *crimsoned* sunset skies. The color of blood is thus plainly taken for the leading tone in the storm-clouds above the "Slave-ship." It occurs with similar distinctness in the much earlier picture of Ulysses and Polypheme, in that of Napoleon at St. Helena, and, subdued by softer hues, in the Old Téméraire. The sky of this Goldau is, in its scarlet and crimson, the deepest in tone of all that I know in Turner's drawings. Another feeling traceable in several of his former works, is an acute sense of the contrast between the careless interests and idle pleasures of daily life, and the state of those whose time for labor, or knowledge, or delight is passed for ever. There is evidence of this feeling in the introduction of the boys at play in the churchyard of Kirkby Lonsdale, and the boy climbing for his kite among the thickets above the little mountain churchyard of Brignalbanks; it is in the same tone of thought that he has placed here the two figures fishing, leaning against these shattered flanks of rock,—the sepulchral stones of the great mountain Field of Death.

§ 25. Another character of these two drawings, which gives them especial interest as connected with our inquiries into mediæval landscape, is, that they are pre-

cisely and accurately illustrative of the two principal ideas of Dante about the Alps. I have already explained the rise of the first drawing out of Turner's early study of the "Male Bolge" of the Splugen and St. Gothard. The Goldau, on the other hand, might have been drawn in purposeful illustration of the lines before referred to (Vol. III. Ch. xv. § 13) as descriptive of a "loco *Alpestro*." I give now Dante's own words:

"Qual' è quella ruina, che nel fianco
Di quà da Trento l'Adice percosse,
O per tremuoto, o per sostegni manco,
Che da cima del monte, onde si mosse,
Al piano è sì la roccia discoscesa
Che alcuna via darebbe a chi su fosse;
Cotal di quel burrato era la scesa."

"As is that landslip, ere you come to Trent,
That smote the flank of Adige, through some stay
Sinking beneath it, or by earthquake rent;
For from the summit, where of old it lay,
Plainwards the broken rock unto the feet
Of one above it might afford some way;
Such path adown this precipice we meet."—CAYLEY.

§ 26. Finally, there are two lessons to be gathered from the opposite conditions of mountain decay, represented in these designs, of perhaps a wider range of meaning than any which were suggested even by the states of mountain strength. In the first, we find the unyielding rock, undergoing no sudden danger, and capable of no total fall, yet, in its hardness of heart, worn away by perpetual trampling of torrent waves, and stress of wandering storm. Its fragments, fruitless and restless, are tossed into ever-changing heaps: no labor of man can subdue them to his service, nor can his utmost patience secure any dwelling-place among them. In this they are the type of all that humanity which, suffering under no sudden punishment or sorrow, remains "stony ground," afflicted, indeed, con-

tinually by minor or vexing cares, but only broken by them into fruitless ruin of fatigued life. Of this ground not "corn-giving,"—this "rough valley, neither eared nor sown,"* of the common world, it is said, to those who have set up their idols in the wreck of it—

"Among the smooth stones of the stream is thy portion. They, they are thy lot."†

But, as we pass beneath the hills which have been shaken by earthquake and torn by convulsion, we find that periods of perfect repose succeeded those of destruction. The pools of calm water lie clear beneath their fallen rocks, the water-lilies gleam, and the reeds whisper among their shadows; the village rises again over the forgotten graves, and its church-tower, white through the storm-twilight, proclaims a renewed appeal to His protection in whose hand "are all the corners of the earth, and the strength of the hills is His also." There is no loveliness of Alpine valley that does not teach the same lesson. It is just where "the mountain falling cometh to naught, and the rock is removed out of his place," that, in process of years, the fairest meadows bloom between the fragments, the clearest rivulets murmur from their crevices among the flowers, and the clustered cottages, each sheltered beneath some strength of mossy stone, now to be removed no more, and with their pastured flocks around them, safe from the eagle's stoop and the wolf's ravin, have written upon their fronts, in simple words, the mountaineer's faith in the ancient promise—

"Neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh;
"For thou shalt be in league with the Stones of the Field; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee."

* Deut. xxi. 4. So Amos, vi. 12: "Shall horses run upon the rock; will one plough here with oxen?"

† Is. lvii. 5, 6.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE MOUNTAIN GLOOM.

§ 1. We have now cursorily glanced over those conditions of mountain structure which appear constant in duration, and universal in extent; and we have found them, invariably, calculated for the delight, the advantage, or the teaching of men; prepared, it seems, so as to contain, alike in fortitude or feebleness, in timeliness or in terror, some beneficence of gift, or profoundness of counsel. We have found that where at first all seemed disturbed and accidental, the most tender laws were appointed to produce forms of perpetual beauty; and that where to the careless or cold observer it seemed severe or purposeless, the well-being of man has been chiefly consulted, and his rightly directed powers, and sincerely awakened intelligence, may find wealth in every falling rock, and wisdom in every talking wave.

It remains for us to consider what actual effect upon the human race has been produced by the generosity, or the instruction of the hills; how far, in past ages, they have been thanked, or listened to; how far, in coming ages, it may be well for us to accept them for tutors, or acknowledge them for friends.

§ 2. What they have already taught us may, one would think, be best discerned in the midst of them,—in some place where they have had their own way with the human soul; where no veil has been drawn between it and them, no contradicting voice has confused their ministries of

sound, or broken their pathos of silence: where war has never streaked their streams with bloody foam, nor ambition sought for other throne than their cloud-courtiered pinnacles, nor avarice for other treasure than, year by year, is given to their unlaborious rocks, in budded jewels, and mossy gold.

§ 3. I do not know any district possessing more pure or uninterrupted fulness of mountain character (and that of the highest order), or which appears to have been less disturbed by foreign agencies, than that which borders the course of the Trient between Valorsine and Martigny. The paths which lead to it out of the valley of the Rhone, rising at first in steep circles among the walnut trees, like winding stairs among the pillars of a Gothic tower, retire over the shoulders of the hills into a valley almost unknown, but thickly inhabited by an industrious and patient population. Along the ridges of the rocks, smoothed by old glaciers into long, dark, billowy swellings, like the backs of plunging dolphins, the peasant watches the slow coloring of the tufts of moss and roots of herb which, little by little, gather a feeble soil over the iron substance; then, supporting the narrow strip of clinging ground with a few stones, he subdues it to the spade; and in a year or two a little crest of corn is seen waving upon the rocky casque. The irregular meadows run in and out like inlets of lake among these harvested rocks, sweet with perpetual streamlets, that seem always to have chosen the steepest places to come down, for the sake of the leaps, scattering their handfuls of crystal this way and that, as the wind takes them, with all the grace, but with none of the formalism, of fountains; dividing into fanciful change of dash and spring, yet with the seal of their granite channels upon them, as the lightest play of human speech may bear the seal of past toil, and closing back out of their spray to lave the rigid angles, and brighten with silver fringes and glassy films

each lower and lower step of sable stone; until at last, gathered altogether again,—except, perhaps, some chance drops caught on the apple-blossom, where it has budded a little nearer the cascade than it did last spring,—they find their way down to the turf, and lose themselves in that silently; with quiet depth of clear water furrowing among the grass blades, and looking only like their shadow, but presently emerging again in little startled gushes and laughing hurries, as if they had remembered suddenly that the day was too short for them to get down the hill.

Green field, and glowing rock, and glancing streamlet, all slope together in the sunshine towards the brows of the ravines, where the pines take up their own dominion of saddened shade; and with everlasting roar in the twilight, the stronger torrents thunder down pale from the glaciers, filling all their chasms with enchanted cold, beating themselves to pieces against the great rocks that they have themselves cast down, and forcing fierce way beneath their ghastly poise.

The mountain paths stoop to these glens in forky zigzags, leading to some gray and narrow arch, all fringed under its shuddering curve with the ferns that fear the light; a cross of rough-hewn pine, iron-bound to its parapet, standing dark against the lurid fury of the foam. Far up the glen, as we pause beside the cross, the sky is seen through the openings in the pines, thin with excess of light; and, in its clear, consuming flame of white space, the summits of the rocky mountains are gathered into solemn crowns and circlets, all flushed in that strange, faint silence of possession by the sunshine which has in it so deep a melancholy; full of power, yet as frail as shadows; lifeless, like the walls of a sepulchre, yet beautiful in tender fall of crimson folds, like the veil of some sea-spirit, that lives and dies as the foam flashes; fixed on a perpetual throne, stern against all

strength, lifted above all sorrow, and yet effaced and melted utterly into the air by that last sunbeam that has crossed to them from between the two golden clouds.

§ 4. High above all sorrow: yes, but not unwitnessing to it. The traveller on his happy journey, as his foot springs from the deep turf and strikes the pebbles gayly over the edge of the mountain road, sees with a glance of delight the clusters of nut-brown cottages that nestle among those sloping orchards, and glow beneath the boughs of the pines. Here, it may well seem to him, if there be sometimes hardship, there must be at least innocence and peace, and fellowship of the human soul with nature. It is not so. The wild goats that leap along those rocks have as much passion of joy in all that fair work of God as the men that toil among them. Perhaps more. Enter the street of one of those villages, and you will find it foul with that gloomy foulness that is suffered only by torpor, or by anguish of soul. Here, it is torpor—not absolute suffering,—not starvation or disease, but darkness of calm enduring; the spring known only as the time of the scythe, and the autumn as the time of the sickle, and the sun only as a warmth, the wind as a chill, and the mountains as a danger. They do not understand so much as the name of beauty, or of knowledge. They understand dimly that of virtue. Love, patience, hospitality, faith,—these things they know. They glean their meadows side by side, so happier; to bear the burden up the breathless mountain flank, unmurmuringly; to bid the stranger drink from their vessel of milk; to see at the foot of their low deathbeds a pale figure upon a cross, dying also, patiently;—in this they are different from the cattle and the stones, but in all this unrewarded as far as concerns the present life. For them, there is neither hope nor passion of spirit; for them neither advance nor exultation. Black

bread, rude roof, dark night, laborious day, weary arm at sunset; and life ebbs away. No books, no thoughts, no attainments, no rest; except only sometimes a little sitting in the sun under the church wall, as the bell tolls thin and far in the mountain air; a pattering of a few prayers, not understood, by the altar rails of the dimly gilded chapel, and so back to the sombre home, with the cloud upon them still unbroken—that cloud of rocky gloom, born out of the wild torrents and ruinous stones, and unlightened, even in their religion, except by the vague promise of some better thing unknown, mingled with threatening, and obscured by an unspeakable horror,—a smoke, as it were, of martyrdom, coiling up with the incense, and, amidst the images of tortured bodies and lamenting spirits in hurtling flames, the very cross, for them, dashed more deeply than for others, with gouts of blood.

§ 5. Do not let this be thought a darkened picture of the life of these mountaineers. It is literal fact. No contrast can be more painful than that between the dwelling of any well-conducted English cottager, and that of the equally honest Savoyard. The one, set in the midst of its dull flat fields and uninteresting hedgerows, shows in itself the love of brightness and beauty; its daisy-studded garden beds, its smoothly swept brick path to the threshold, its freshly sanded floor and orderly shelves of household furniture, all testify to energy of heart, and happiness in the simple course and simple possessions of daily life. The other cottage, in the midst of an inconceivable, inexpressible beauty, set on some sloping bank of golden sward, with clear fountains flowing beside it, and wild flowers, and noble trees, and goodly rocks gathered round into a perfection as of Paradise, is itself a dark and plague-like stain in the midst of the gentle landscape. Within a certain distance of its threshold the ground is foul and cattle-trampled; its timbers are

black with smoke, its garden choked with weeds and nameless refuse, its chambers empty and joyless, the light and wind gleaming and filtering through the crannies of their stones. All testifies that to its inhabitant the world is labor and vanity; that for him neither flowers bloom, nor birds sing, nor fountains glisten; and that his soul hardly differs from the gray cloud that coils and dies upon his hills; except in having no fold of it touched by the sunbeams.

§ 6. Is it not strange to reflect, that hardly an evening passes in London or Paris but one of those cottages is painted for the better amusement of the fair and idle, and shaded with pasteboard pines by the scene-shifter; and that good and kind people,—poetically minded,—delight themselves in imagining the happy life led by peasants who dwell by Alpine fountains, and kneel to crosses upon peaks of rock? that nightly we lay down our gold to fashion forth simulacra of peasants, in gay ribands and white bodices, singing sweet songs, and bowing gracefully to the picturesque crosses; and all the while the veritable peasants are kneeling, songlessly, to veritable crosses, in another temper than the kind and fair audiences dream of, and assuredly with another kind of answer than is got out of the opera catastrophe; an answer having reference, it may be, in dim futurity, to those very audiences themselves? If all the gold that has gone to paint the simulacra of the cottages, and to put new songs into the mouths of the simulacra of the peasants, had gone to brighten the existent cottages, and to put new songs into the mouths of the existent peasants, it might in the end, perhaps, have turned out better so, not only for the peasants, but for even the audience. For that form of the False Ideal has also its correspondent True Ideal,—consisting not in the naked beauty of statues, nor in the gauze flowers and crackling tinsel of theatres, but in the clothed and fed beauty of

living men, and in the lights and laughs of happy homes. Night after night, the desire of such an ideal springs up in every idle human heart; and night after night, as far as idleness can, we work out this desire in costly lies. We paint the faded actress, build the lath landscape, feed our benevolence with fallacies of felicity, and satisfy our righteousness with poetry of justice. The time will come when, as the heavy-folded curtain falls upon our own stage of life, we shall begin to comprehend that the justice we loved was intended to have been done in fact, and not in poetry, and the felicity we sympathized in, to have been bestowed and not feigned. We talk much of money's worth, yet perhaps may one day be surprised to find that what the wise and charitable European public gave to one night's rehearsal of hypocrisy,—to one hour's pleasant warbling of Linda or Lucia,—would have filled a whole Alpine valley with happiness, and poured the waves of harvest over the famine of many a Lammermoor.*

* As I was correcting this sheet for press, the morning paper containing the account of the burning of Covent Garden theatre furnished the following financial statements, bearing somewhat on the matter in hand; namely,

	£
That the interior fittings of the theatre, in 1846, cost -	40,000
That it was opened on the 6th of April, 1847; and that in 1848 the loss upon it was - -	34,756
in 1849 " " - - -	25,455
	100,211

	£
And that in one year the vocal department cost	33,349
the ballet " "	8,105
the orchestra " "	10,048
	51,502

Mr. Albano afterwards corrected this statement, substituting 27,000 for 40,000: and perhaps the other sums may also have been exagger-

§ 7. "Nay," perhaps the reader answers, "it is vain to hope that this could ever be. The perfect beauty of the ideal must always be fictitious. It is rational to amuse

ated, but I leave the reader to consider what an annual expenditure of from 30,000*l.* to 50,000*l.* might effect in practical idealism in general, whether in Swiss valleys or elsewhere. I am not one of those who regard all theatrical entertainment as wrong or harmful. I only regret to see our theatres so conducted as to involve an expense which is worse than useless, in leading our audiences to look for mere stage effect, instead of good acting, good singing, or good sense. If we really loved music, or the drama, we should be content to hear well-managed voices, and see finished acting, without paying five or six thousand pounds to dress the songsters or decorate the stage. Simple but well-chosen dresses, and quiet landscape exquisitely painted, would have far more effect on the feelings of any sensible audience than the tinsel and extravagance of our common scenery; and our actors and actresses must have little respect for their own powers, if they think that dignity of gesture is dependent on the flash of jewelry, or the pathos of accents connected with the costliness of silk. Perfect execution of music by a limited orchestra is far more delightful, and far less fatiguing, than the irregular roar and hum of multitudinous mediocrity; and finished instrumentation by an adequate number of performers, exquisite acting, and sweetest singing, might be secured for the public at a fourth part of the cost now spent on operatic absurdities. There is no occasion whatever for decoration of the house; it is, on the contrary, the extreme of vulgarity. No person of good taste ever goes to a theatre to look at the fronts of the boxes. Comfortable and roomy seats, perfect cleanliness, decent and fitting curtains and other furniture, of good stuff, but neither costly nor tawdry, and convenient, but not dazzling, light, are the proper requirements in the furnishing of an opera-house. As for the persons who go there to look at each other—to show their dresses—to yawn away waste hours—to obtain a maximum of momentary excitement—or to say they were there, at next day's three-o'clock breakfast (and it is only for such persons that glare, cost, and noise are necessary), I commend to their consideration, or at least to such consideration as is possible to their capacities, the suggestions in the text. But to the true lovers of the drama I would submit, as another subject of inquiry, whether they ought not to separate themselves from the mob, and provide, for their own modest, quiet, and guiltless entertainment, the truth of heartfelt impersonation, and the melody of the unforced and delicate voice, without extravagance of adjunct, unhealthy lateness of hours, or appeal to degraded passions. Such entertainment might be

ourselves with the fair imagination; but it would be madness to endeavor to put it into practice, in the face of the ordinances of Nature. Real shepherdesses must always be rude, and real peasants miserable; suffer us to turn away our gentle eyes from their coarseness and their pain, and to seek comfort in cultivated voices and purchased smiles. We cannot hew down the rocks, nor turn the sands of the torrent into gold."

§ 8. This is no answer. Be assured of the great truth —that what is impossible in reality is ridiculous in fancy. If it is not in the nature of things that peasants should be gentle and happy, then the imagination of such peasantry is ridiculous, and to delight in such imagination wrong; as delight in any kind of falsehood is always. But if in the nature of things it be possible that among the wildness of hills the human heart should be refined, and if the comfort of dress, and the gentleness of language, and the joy of progress in knowledge, and of variety in thought, are possible to the mountaineer in his true existence, let us strive to write this true poetry upon the rocks before we indulge it in our visions, and try whether, among all the fine arts, one of the finest be not that of painting cheeks with health rather than rouge.

§ 9. "But is such refinement possible? Do not the conditions of the mountain peasant's life, in the plurality of instances, necessarily forbid it?"

As bearing sternly on this question, it is necessary to examine one peculiarity of feeling which manifests itself among the European nations, so far as I have no-

obtained at infinitely smaller cost, and yet at a price which would secure honorable and permanent remuneration to every performer; and I am mistaken in my notion of the best actors, if they would not rather play at a house where people went to hear and to feel, than weary themselves, even for four times the pay, before an audience insulting in its listlessness and ignorant in its applause.

ticed, irregularly,—appearing sometimes to be the characteristic of a particular time, sometimes of a particular race, sometimes of a particular locality, and to involve at once much that is to be blamed and much that is praiseworthy. I mean the capability of enduring, or even delighting in, the contemplation of objects of terror—a sentiment which especially influences the temper of some groups of mountaineers, and of which it is necessary to examine the causes, before we can form any conjecture whatever as to the real effect of mountains on human character.

§ 10. For instance, the unhappy alterations which have lately taken place in the town of Lucerne have still spared two of its ancient bridges; both of which, being long covered walks, appear, in past times, to have been to the population of the town what the Mall was to London, or the Gardens of the Tuileries are to Paris. For the continual contemplation of those who sauntered from pier to pier, pictures were painted on the woodwork of the roof. These pictures, in the one bridge, represent all the important Swiss battles and victories; in the other they are well-known series of which Longfellow has made so beautiful a use in the Golden Legend, the *Dance of Death.*

Imagine the countenances with which a committee, appointed for the establishment of a new "promenade" in some flourishing modern town, would receive a proposal to adorn such promenade with pictures of the Dance of Death.

§ 11. Now, just so far as the old bridge at Lucerne, with the pure, deep, and blue water of the Reuss eddying down between its piers, and with the sweet darkness of green hills, and far-away gleaming of lake and Alps alternating upon the eye on either side; and the gloomy lesson frowning in the shadow, as if the deep tone of a passing-bell, overhead, were mingling for ever with the

plashing of the river as it glides by beneath; just so far, I say, as this differs from the straight and smooth strip of level dust, between two rows of round-topped acacia-trees, wherein the inhabitants of an English watering-place or French fortified town take their delight,—so far I believe the life of the old Lucernois, with all its happy waves of light, and mountain strength of will, and solemn expectation of eternity, to have differed from the generality of the lives of those who saunter for their habitual hour up and down the modern promenade. But the gloom is not always of this noble kind. As we penetrate farther among the hills we shall find it becoming very painful. We are walking, perhaps, in a summer afternoon, up the valley of Zermatt (a German valley), the sun shining brightly on grassy knolls and through fringes of pines, the goats leaping happily, and the cattle bells ringing sweetly, and the snowy mountains shining like heavenly castles far above. We see, a little way off, a small white chapel, sheltered behind one of the flowery hillocks of mountain turf; and we approach its little window, thinking to look through it into some quiet home of prayer; but the window is grated with iron, and open to the winds, and when we look through it, behold—a heap of white human bones mouldering into whiter dust!

So also in that same sweet valley, of which I have just been speaking, between Chamouni and the Valais, at every turn of the pleasant pathway, where the scent of the thyme lies richest upon its rocks, we shall see a little cross and shrine set under one of them; and go up to it, hoping to receive some happy thought of the Redeemer, by whom all these lovely things were made, and still consist. But when we come near—behold, beneath the cross, a rude picture of souls tormented in red tongues of hell fire, and pierced by demons.

§ 12. As we pass towards Italy the appearance of this

gloom deepens; and when we descend the southern slope of the Alps we shall find this bringing forward of the image of Death associated with an endurance of the most painful aspects of disease; so that conditions of human suffering, which in any other country would be confined in hospitals, are permitted to be openly exhibited by the wayside; and with this exposure of the degraded human form is farther connected an insensibility to ugliness and imperfection in other things; so that the ruined wall, neglected garden, and uncleansed chamber, seem to unite in expressing a gloom of spirit possessing the inhabitants of the whole land. It does not appear to arise from poverty, nor careless contentment with little: there is here nothing of Irish recklessness or humor; but there seems a settled obscurity in the soul,—a chill and plague, as if risen out of a sepulchre, which partly deadens, partly darkens, the eyes and hearts of men, and breathes a leprosy of decay through every breeze and every stone. "Instead of well-set hair, baldness, and burning instead of beauty."

Nor are definite proofs wanting that the feeling is independent of mere poverty or indolence. In the most gorgeous and costly palace garden the statues will be found green with moss, the terraces defaced or broken; the palace itself partly coated with marble, is left in other places rough with cementless and jagged brick, its iron balconies bent and rusted, its pavements overgrown with grass. The more energetic the effort has been to recover from this state, and to shake off all appearance of poverty, the more assuredly the curse seems to fasten on the scene, and the unslaked mortar, and unfinished wall, and ghastly desolation of incompleteness entangled in decay, strike a deeper despondency into the beholder.

§ 13. The feeling would be also more easily accounted for if it appeared consistent in its regardlessness of

beauty,—if what was *done* were altogether as inefficient as what was deserted. But the balcony, though rusty and broken, is delicate in design, and supported on a nobly carved slab of marble; the window, though a mere black rent in ragged plaster, is encircled by a garland of vine and fronted by a thicket of the sharp leaves and aurora-colored flowers of the oleander; the court-yard, overgrown by mournful grass, is terminated by a bright fresco of gardens and fountains; the corpse, borne with the bare face to heaven, is strewn with flowers; beauty is continually mingled with the shadow of death.

§ 14. So also is a kind of merriment,—not true cheerfulness, neither careless nor idle jesting, but a determined effort at gayety, a resolute laughter, mixed with much satire, grossness, and practical buffoonery, and, it always seemed to me, void of all comfort or hope,—with this eminent character in it also, that it is capable of touching with its bitterness even the most fearful subjects, so that as the love of beauty retains its tenderness in the presence of death, this love of jest also retains its boldness, and the skeleton becomes one of the standard masques of the Italian comedy. When I was in Venice, in 1850, the most popular piece of the *comic* opera was "Death and the Cobbler," in which the point of the plot was the success of a village cobbler as a physician, in consequence of the appearance of Death to him beside the bed of every patient who was not to recover; and the most applauded scene in it was one in which the physician, insolent in success, and swollen with luxury, was himself taken down into the abode of Death, and thrown into an agony of terror by being shown lives of men, under the form of wasting lamps, and his own ready to expire.

§ 15. I have also not the smallest doubt that this endurance or affronting of fearful images is partly associ-

ated with indecency, partly with general fatuity and weakness of mind. The men who applauded loudest when the actress put on, in an instant, her mask representing a skull, and when her sharp and clear "Sono la Morte" rang through the theatre, were just those whose disgusting habits rendered it impossible for women to pass through some of the principal streets in Venice,—just those who formed the gaping audience, when a mountebank offered a new quack medicine on the Riva dei Schiavoni. And, as fearful imagery is associated with the weakness of fever, so it seems to me that imbecility and love of terror are connected by a mysterious link throughout the whole life of man. There is a most touching instance of this in the last days of Sir Walter Scott, the publication of whose latter works, deeply to be regretted on many accounts, was yet, perhaps, on the whole, right, as affording a means of studying the conditions of the decay of overwrought human intellect in one of the most noble of minds. Among the many signs of this decay at its uttermost, in "Castle Dangerous," not one of the least notable was the introduction of the knight who bears on his black armor the likeness of a skeleton.

§ 16. The love of horror which is in this manner connected with feebleness of intellect, is not, however, to be confounded with that shown by the vulgar in general. The feeling which is calculated upon in the preparation of pieces full of terror and crime, at our lower theatres, and which is fed with greater art and elegance in the darker scenery of the popular French novelists, however morally unhealthy, is not *unnatural;* it is not the result of an apathy to such horror, but of a strong desire for excitement in minds coarse and dull, but not necessarily feeble. The scene of the murder of the jeweller in the "Count of Monte Cristo," or those with the Squelette in the "Mystères de Paris," appeal to instincts which

are as common to all mankind as those of thirst and hunger, and which are only debasing in the exaggerated condition consequent upon the dulness of other instincts higher than they. And the persons who, at one period of their life, might take chief pleasure in such narrations, at another may be brought into a temper of high tone and acute sensibility. But the love of horror respecting which we are now inquiring appears to be an unnatural and feeble feeling; it is not that the person needs excitement, or has any such strong perceptions as would cause excitement, but he is dead to the horror, and a strange evil influence guides his feebleness of mind rather to fearful images than to beautiful ones,— as our disturbed dreams are sometimes filled with ghastliness which seems not to arise out of any conceivable association of our waking ideas, but to be a vapor out of the very chambers of the tomb, to which the mind, in its palsy, has approached.

§ 17. But even this imbecile revelling in terror is more comprehensible, more apparently natural, than the instinct which is found frequently connected with it, of absolute joy in *ugliness*. In some conditions of old German art we find the most singular insisting upon what is in all respects ugly and abortive, or frightful; not with any sense of sublimity in it, neither in mere foolishness, but with a resolute choice, such as I can completely account for on no acknowledged principle of human nature. For in the worst conditions of sensuality there is yet some perception of the beautiful, so that men utterly depraved in principle and habits of thought will yet admire beautiful things and fair faces. But in the temper of which I am now speaking there is no preference even of the lower forms of loveliness; no effort at painting fair limbs or passionate faces, no evidence of any human or natural sensation,—a mere feeding on decay and rolling in

slime, not apparently or conceivably with any pleasure in it, but under some fearful possession of an evil spirit.

§ 18. The most wonderful instance of this feeling at its uttermost which I remember, is the missal in the British Museum, Harl. MSS. 1892. The drawings of the principal subjects in it appear to have been made first in black, by Martin Schöngauer (at all events by some copyist of his designs), and then another workman has been employed to paint these drawings over. No words can describe the intensity of the "plague of the heart" in this man; the reader should examine the manuscript carefully if he desires to see how low human nature can sink. I had written a description of one or two of the drawings in order to give some conception of them to persons not able to refer to the book; but the mere description so saddened and polluted my pages that I could not retain it. I will only, therefore, name the principal characteristics which belong to the workman's mind.

§ 19. First, Perpetual tampering with death, whether there be occasion to allude to it or not,—especially insisting upon its associations with corruption. I do not pain the reader by dwelling on the details illustrative of this feeling.

Secondly, Delight in dismemberment, dislocation, and distortion of attitude. Distortion, to some extent, is a universal characteristic of the German fifteenth and sixteenth century art; that is to say, there is a general aptitude for painting legs across, or feet twisted round, or bodies awkwardly bent, rather than anything in a natural position; and Martin Schöngauer himself exhibits this defect in no small degree. But here the finishing workman has dislocated nearly every joint which he has exposed, besides knitting and twisting the muscles into mere knots of cordage.

What, however, only amounts to dislocation in the limbs of the human figures, becomes actual dismemberment in the animals. Fig. 113 is a faithful copy of a tree with two *birds*, one on its bough, and one above it, seen in the background, behind a soldier's mace, in the drawing of the Betrayal. In the engraving of this subject, by Schöngauer himself, the mace does not occur; it has been put in by the finishing workman, in order to give greater expression of savageness to the boughs of the tree, which, joined with the spikes of the mace, form one mass of disorganized angles and thorns, while the birds look partly as if being torn to pieces, and partly like black spiders.

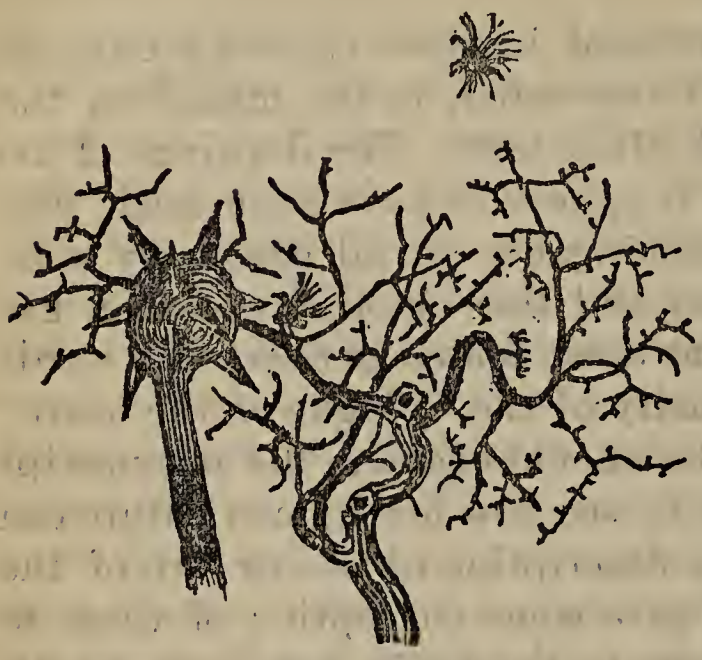


Fig. 113.

In the painting itself the sky also is covered with little detached and bent white strokes, by way of clouds, and the hair of the figures torn into ragged locks, like wood rent by a cannon shot.

This tendency to dismember and separate everything is one of the eminent conditions of a mind leaning to vice and ugliness; just as to connect and harmonize everything is that of a mind leaning to virtue and beauty. It is shown down to the smallest details; as, for instance, in the spotted backgrounds, which, instead of being chequered with connected patterns, as in the noble manuscripts (see Vol. III. Plate 7), are covered with disorderly dashes and circles executed with a blunt pen or brush, Fig. 114. And one of the borders

is composed of various detached heads cut off at the neck or shoulders without the slightest endeavor to conceal or decorate the truncation. All this, of course, is associated with choice of the most abominable features in the countenance.

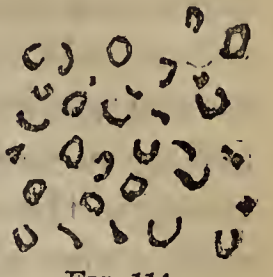


Fig. 114.

§ 20. Thirdly, Pure ignorance. Necessarily, such a mind as this must be incapable of perceiving the truth of any form; and therefore together with the distortion of all studied form is associated the utter negation or imperfection of that which is less studied.

Fourthly, Delight in blood. I cannot use the words which would be necessary to describe the second* painting of the Scourging, in this missal. But I may generally notice that the degree in which the peculiar feeling we are endeavoring to analyze is present in any district of Roman Catholic countries, may be almost accurately measured by the quantity of blood represented on the crucifixes.

The person employed to repaint, in the Campo Santo of Pisa, the portion of Orcagna's pictures representing the Inferno, has furnished a very notable example of the same feeling; and it must be familiar to all travellers in countries thoroughly subjected to *modern* Romanism, a thing as different from thirteenth-century Romanism as a prison from a prince's chamber.

Lastly, Utter absence of inventive power. The only ghastliness which this workman is capable of is that of distortion. In ghastly *combination* he is impotent; he cannot even understand it or copy it when set before him, continually destroying any that exists in the drawing of Schöngauer.

* There are, unusually, two paintings of this subject, the first representing the preparations for the scourging, the second its close.

§ 21. Such appear to be the principal component elements in the mind of the painter of this missal, and it possesses these in complete abstraction from nearly all others, showing, in deadly purity, the nature of the venom which in ordinary cases is tempered by counteracting elements. There are even certain feelings, evil enough themselves, but more *natural* than these, of which the slightest mingling would here be a sort of redemption. Vanity, for instance, would lead to a more finished execution, and more careful copying from nature, and of course subdue the ugliness by fidelity; love of pleasure would introduce occasionally a graceful or sensual form; malice would give some point and meaning to the bordering grotesques, nay, even insanity might have given them some inventive horror. But the pure mortiferousness of this mind, capable neither of patience, fidelity, grace, or wit, in any place, or from any motive, —this horrible apathy of brain, which cannot ascend so high as insanity, but is capable only of putrefaction, save us the task of all analysis, and leave us only that of examining how this black aqua Tophana mingles with other conditions of mind.

§ 22. For I have led the reader over this dark ground, because it was essential to our determination of the influence of mountains that we should get what data we could as to the extent in other districts, and derivation from other causes, of the horror which at first we might have been led to connect too arbitrarily with hill scenery. And I wish that my knowledge permitted me to trace it over wider ground, for the observations hitherto stated leave the question still one of great difficulty. It might appear to a traveller crossing and recrossing the Alps between Switzerland and Italy, that the main strength of the evil lay on the south of the chain, and was attributable to the peculiar circumstances and character of the Italian nation at this period. But as he examined the

matter farther he would note that in the districts of Italy generally supposed to be *healthy*, the evidence of it was less, and that it seemed to gain ground in places exposed to malaria, centralizing itself in the Val d'Aosta. He would then, perhaps, think it inconsistent with justice to lay the blame on the mountains, and transfer his accusation to the marshes, yet would be compelled to admit that the evil manifested itself most where these marshes were surrounded by hills. He would next, probably, suppose it produced by the united effect of hardships, solitude, and unhealthy air; and be disposed to find fault with the mountains, at least so far as they required painful climbing and laborious agriculture;—but would again be thrown into doubt by remembering that one main branch of the feeling,—the love of ugliness, seemed to belong in a peculiar manner to Northern Germany. If at all familiar with the art of the North and South, he would perceive that the *endurance* of ugliness, which in Italy resulted from languor or depression (while the mind yet retained some apprehension of the difference between fairness and deformity, as above noted in § 12), was not to be confounded with that absence of perception of the Beautiful, which introduced a general hard-featuredness of figure into all German and Flemish early art, even when Germany and Flanders were in their brightest national health and power. And as he followed out in detail the comparison of all the purest ideals north and south of the Alps, and perceived the perpetual contrast existing between the angular and bony sanctities of the one latitude, and the drooping graces and pensive pieties of the other, he would no longer attribute to the ruggedness, or miasma, of the mountains the origin of a feeling, which showed itself so strongly in the comfortable streets of Antwerp and Nuremberg, and in the unweakened and active intellects of Van Eyck and Albert Durer.

§ 23. As I think over these various difficulties, the following conclusions seem to me deducible from the data I at present possess. I am in nowise confident of their accuracy, but they may assist the reader in pursuing the inquiry farther.

Conditions which produce the Mountain gloom.

I. It seems to me, first, that a fair degree of intellect and imagination is necessary before this kind of disease is possible. It does not seize on merely stupid peasantries, but on those which belong to intellectual races, and in whom the faculties of imagination and the sensibilities of heart were originally strong and tender. In flat land, with fresh air, the peasantry may be almost mindless, but not infected with this gloom.

General power of intellect.

II. In the second place, I think it is closely connected with the Romanist religion, and that for several causes.

Romanism.

A. The habitual use of bad art (ill-made dolls and bad pictures), in the services of religion, naturally blunts the delicacy of the senses, by requiring reverence to be paid to ugliness, and familiarizing the eye to it in moments of strong and pure feeling; I do not think we can overrate the probable evil results of this enforced discordance between the sight and imagination.

B. The habitually dwelling on the penances, tortures, and martyrdoms of the Saints, as subjects of admiration and sympathy, together with much meditation on Purgatorial suffering; rendered almost impossible to Protestants by the greater fearfulness of such reflections, when the punishment is supposed eternal.

C. Idleness, and neglect of the proper duties of daily life, during the large number of holidays in the year, together with want of proper cleanliness, induced by the idea that comfort and happy purity are less pleasing to God than discomfort and self-degradation. This indolence induces much despondency, a larger measure of real

misery than is necessary under the given circumstances of life, and many forms of crime and disease besides.

D. Superstitious indignation. I do not know if it is as a result of the combination of these several causes, or if under a separate head, that I should class a certain strange awe which seems to attach itself to Romanism like its shadow, differing from the coarser gloom which we have been examining, in that it can attach itself to minds of the highest purity and keenness, and, indeed, does so to these more than to inferior ones. It is an undefinable pensiveness, leading to great severity of precept, mercilessness in punishment, and dark or discouraging thoughts of God and man.*

It is connected partly with a greater belief in the daily presence and power of evil spirits than is common in Protestants (except the more enthusiastic, and *also gloomy*, sects of Puritans), connected also with a sternness of belief in the condemnatory power and duty of the Church, leading to persecution, and to less tempered indignation at opposition of opinion than characterizes the Protestant mind ordinarily, which, though waspish and bitter enough, is not liable to the peculiar heart-burning caused in a Papist by any insult to his Church, or by the aspect of what he believes to be heresy.

§ 24. For all these reasons, I think Romanism is very definitely connected with the gloom we are examining, so as without fail to produce some measure of it in all persons who sincerely hold that faith; and if such effect is ever not to be traced, it is because the Romanism is checked by infidelity. The atheism or dissipation of a large portion of the population in crowded capitals pre-

* This character has, I think, been traced in the various writings of Mrs. Sherwood better than in any others; she has a peculiar art of making it felt and of striking the deep tone of it as from a passing-bell, contrasting it with the most cheerful, lovely, and sincere conditions of Protestantism.

vents this gloom from being felt in full force; but it resumes its power, in mountain solitudes, over the minds of the comparatively ignorant and more suffering peasantry; so that it is not an evil inherent in the hills themselves, but one result of the continuance in them of that old religious voice of warning, which, encouraging sacred feeling in general, encourages also whatever evil may essentially belong to the form of doctrine preached among them.

§ 25. III. It is assuredly connected also with a diseased state of health. Cheerfulness is just as natural to the heart of a man in strong health as color to his cheek; and wherever there is habitual gloom, there must be either bad air, unwholesome food, improperly severe labor, or erring habits of life. Among mountains, all these various causes are frequently found in combination. The air is either too bleak, or it is impure; generally the peasants are exposed to alternations of both. Great hardship is sustained in various ways, severe labor undergone during summer, and a sedentary and confined life led during winter. Where the gloom exists in less elevated districts, as in Germany, I do not doubt, though I have not historical knowledge enough to prove this, that it is partly connected with habits of sedentary life, pro-

Disease of body.

Fig. 115.

tracted study, and general derangement of the bodily system in consequence; when it exists in the gross form exhibited in the manuscript above examined, I have no doubt it has been fostered by habits of general vice, cruelty, and dissipation.

§ 26. IV. Considered as a natural insensibility to beauty, it is, I imagine, indicative of a certain want of cultivation in the race among whom it is found, perhaps without corporeal or mental weakness, but produced by rudeness of life, absence of examples of beautiful art, defects in the mould of the national features, and such other adversities, generally belonging to northern nations as opposed to southern. Here, however, again my historical knowledge is at fault, and I must leave the reader to follow out the question for himself, if it interests him. A single example may be useful to those who have not time for investigation, in order to show the kind of difference I mean.

Rudeness of life.

Fig. 116.

Fig. 115 is a St. Peter, from a German fifteenth-century MS., of good average execution; and Fig. 116 a Madonna, either of the best English, or second-rate French, work, from a service-book executed in 1290. The reader will, I doubt not, perceive at once the general grace and tenderness of sentiment in the lines of the drapery of the last, and the comparatively delicate type of features. The hardness of line, gesture, and feature in the German example, though two centuries at least later, are, I think, equally notable. They are accompanied in the rest of the MS., by an excessive coarse-

ness in choice of ornamental subject: beneath a female figure typical of the Church, for instance, there is painted a carcass, just butchered, and hung up with skewers through the legs.

§ 27. V. In many high mountain districts, not only are the inhabitants likely to be hurt by hardships of life, and retarded by roughness of manners, but their eyes are familiarized with certain conditions of ugliness and disorder, produced by the violence of the elements around them. Once accustomed to look upon these conditions as inevitable in nature, they may easily transfer the idea of inevitableness and fitness to the same appearances in their own houses. I said that mountains seem to have been created to show us the perfection of beauty; but we saw in the tenth chapter that they also show sometimes the extreme of ugliness: and to the inhabitants of districts of this kind it is almost necessary to their daily comfort that they should view without dislike aspects of desolation which would to others be frightful. And can we blame them, if, when the rivers are continually loading their fields with heaps of black slime, and rolling, in time of flood, over the thickets on their islets, leaving, when the flood is past, every leaf and bough dim with granite-dust,—never more to be green through all the parching of summer; when the landslip leaves a ghastly scar among the grassy mounds of the hill side;—the rocks above are torn by their glaciers into rifts and wounds that are never healed; and the ice itself blackened league after league with loose ruin cast upon it as if out of some long and foul excavation;—can we blame, I say, the peasant, if, beholding these things daily as necessary appointments in the strong nature around him, he is careless that the same disorders should appear in his household or his farm; nor feels discomforted, though his walls should be full of fissures like the rocks, his fur-

niture covered with dust like the trees, and his garden like the glacier in unsightliness of trench and desolation of mound?

§ 28. Under these five heads are embraced, as far as I am able to trace them, the causes of the temper which we are examining; and it will be seen that only the last is quite peculiar to mountain and marsh districts, although there is a somewhat greater probability that the others also may be developed among hills more than in plains. When, by untoward accident, all are associated, and the conditions described under the fifth head are very distinct, the result is even sublime in its painfulness. Of places subjected to such evil influence, none are quite so characteristic as the town of Sion, in the Valais. In the first place (see § 23), the material on which it works is good; the race of peasantry being there both handsome and intelligent, as far as they escape the adverse influences around them; so that on a fête-day or a Sunday, when the families come down from the hill châlets, where the air is healthier, many very pretty faces may be seen among the younger women, set off by somewhat more pains in adjustment of the singular Valaisan costume than is now usual in other cantons of Switzerland.

§ 29. Secondly, it is a bishopric, and quite the centre of Romanism in Switzerland, all the most definite Romanist doctrines being evidently believed sincerely, and by a majority of the population; Protestantism having no hold upon them at all; and republican infidelity, though active in the councils of the commune, having as yet, so far as I could see, little influence in the hearts of households. The prominence of the Valais among Roman Catholic states has always been considerable. The Cardinal of Sion was, of old, one of the personages most trouble-

some to the Venetian ambassadors at the English Court.*

§ 30. Thirdly, it is in the midst of a marshy valley, pregnant with various disease; the water either stagnant, or disgorged in wild torrents charged with earth; the air, in the morning, stagnant also, hot, close, and infected; in the afternoon, rushing up from the outlet at Martigny in fitful and fierce whirlwind; one side of the valley in almost continual shade, the other (it running east and west) scorched by the southern sun, and sending streams of heat into the air all night long from its torrid limestones; while less traceable plagues than any of these bring on the inhabitants, at a certain time of life, violent affections of goitre, and often, in infancy, cretinism. Agriculture is attended with the greatest difficulties and despondencies; the land which the labor of a life has just rendered fruitful is often buried in an hour; and the carriage of materials, as well as the traversing of land on the steep hill sides, attended with extraordinary fatigue.

§ 31. Owing to these various influences, Sion, the capital of the district, presents one of the most remarkable scenes for the study of the particular condition of human feeling at present under consideration that I know among mountains. It consists of little more than one main street, winding round the roots of two ridges of crag, and branching, on the sides towards the rocks, into a few narrow lanes, on the other, into spaces of waste ground, of which part serve for military exercises, part are enclosed in an uncertain and vague way; a ditch half-filled up, or wall half-broken down, seeming to indicate their belonging, or having been intended to belong, to some of the unfinished houses which are

* See Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII. (Despatches of the Venetian ambassador Giustinian, translated by Mr. Rawdon Brown), 1854.

springing up amidst their weeds. But it is difficult to say, in any part of the town, what is garden-ground or what is waste; still more, what is new building and what old. The houses have been for the most part built roughly of the coarse limestone of the neighboring hills, then coated with plaster, and painted, in imitation of Palladian palaces, with gray architraves and pilasters, having draperies from capital to capital. With this false decoration is curiously contrasted a great deal of graceful, honest, and original ironwork, in bulging balconies, and floreted gratings of huge windows, and branching sprays, for any and every purpose of support or guard. The plaster, with its fresco, has in most instances dropped away, leaving the houses peeled and scarred; daubed into uncertain restoration with new mortar, and in the best cases thus left; but commonly fallen also, more or less, into ruin, and either roofed over at the first story when the second has fallen, or hopelessly abandoned;—not pulled down, but left in white and ghastly shells to crumble into heaps of limestone and dust, a pauper or two still inhabiting where inhabitation is possible. The lanes wind among these ruins; the blue sky and mountain grass are seen through the windows of their rooms and over their partitions, on which old gaudy papers flaunt in rags: the weeds gather, and the dogs scratch about their foundations; yet there are no luxuriant weeds, for their ragged leaves are blanched with lime, crushed under perpetually falling fragments, and worn away by listless standing of idle feet. There is always mason's work doing, always some fresh patching and whitening; a dull smell of mortar, mixed with that of stale foulness of every kind, rises with the dust, and defiles every current of air; the corners are filled with accumulations of stones, partly broken, with crusts of cement sticking to them, and blotches of nitre oozing out of their pores. The lichenous rocks

and sunburnt slopes of grass stretch themselves hither and thither among the wreck, curiously traversed by stairs and walls and half-cut paths, that disappear below starkly black arches, and cannot be followed, or rise in windings round the angles, and in unfenced slopes along the fronts, of the two masses of rock which bear, one the dark castle, the other the old church and convent of Sion; beneath, in a rudely inclosed square at the outskirts of the town, a still more ancient Lombardic church raises its gray tower, a kind of esplanade extending between it and the Episcopal palace, and laid out as a plot of grass, intersected by gravel walks; but the grass, in strange sympathy with the inhabitants, will not grow *as* grass, but chokes itself with a network of gray weeds, quite wonderful in its various expression of thorny discontent and savageness; the blue flower of the borage, which mingles with it in quantities, hardly interrupting its character, for the violent black spots in the centre of its blue take away the tenderness of the flower, and it seems to have grown there in some supernatural mockery of its old renown of being good against melancholy. The rest of the herbage is chiefly composed of the dwarf mallow, the wild succory, the wall-rocket, goose-foot, and milfoil;* plants, nearly all of them, jagged in the leaf, broken and dimly clustered in flower, haunters of waste ground and places of outcast refuse.

Beyond this plot of ground the Episcopal palace, a half-deserted, barrack-like building, overlooks a *neglected vineyard*, of which the clusters, black on the under side, snow-white on the other with lime-dust, gather around them a melancholy hum of flies. Through the arches of its trellis-work the avenue of the great valley is seen in descending distance, enlarged with line beyond line of tufted foliage, languid and rich, degenerating at last

* Malva rotundifolia, Cichorium Intybus, Sisymbrium tenuifolium, Chenopodium urbicum, Achillea Millefolium.

into leagues of gray Maremma, wild with the thorn and the willow; on each side of it, sustaining themselves in mighty slopes and unbroken reaches of colossal promontory, the great mountains secede into supremacy through rosy depths of burning air, and the crescents of snow gleam over their dim summits as—if there could be Mourning, as once there was War, in Heaven—a line of waning moons might be set for lamps along the sides of some sepulchral chamber in the Infinite.

§ 32. I know not how far this universal grasp of the sorrowful spirit might be relaxed if sincere energy were directed to amend the ways of life of the Valaisan. But it has always appeared to me that there was, even in more healthy mountain districts, a certain degree of inevitable melancholy; nor could I ever escape from the feeling that here, where chiefly the beauty of God's working was manifested to men, warning was also given, and that to the full, of the enduring of His indignation against sin.

It seems one of the most cunning and frequent of self-deceptions to turn the heart away from this warning and refuse to acknowledge anything in the fair scenes of the natural creation but beneficence. Men in general lean towards the light, so far as they contemplate such things at all, most of them passing "by on the other side," either in mere plodding pursuit of their own work, irrespective of what good or evil is around them, or else in selfish gloom, or selfish delight, resulting from their own circumstances at the moment. Of those who give themselves to any true contemplation, the plurality, being humble, gentle, and kindly hearted, look only in nature for what is lovely and kind; partly, also, God gives the disposition to every healthy human mind in some degree to pass over or even harden itself against evil things, else the suffering would be too great to be borne; and humble people, with a quiet trust that every-

thing is for the best, do not fairly represent the facts to themselves, thinking them none of their business. So, what between hard-hearted people, thoughtless people, busy people, humble people, and cheerfully minded people—giddiness of youth, and preoccupations of age—philosophies of faith, and cruelties of folly—priest and Levite, masquer and merchantman, all agreeing to keep their own side of the way—the evil that God sends to warn us gets to be forgotten, and the evil that He sends to be mended by us gets left unmended. And then, because people shut their eyes to the dark indisputableness of the facts in front of them, their Faith, such as it is, is shaken or uprooted by every darkness in what is revealed to them. In the present day it is not easy to find a well-meaning man among our more earnest thinkers, who will not take upon himself to dispute the whole system of redemption, because he cannot unravel the mystery of the punishment of sin. But can he unravel the mystery of the punishment of NO sin? Can he entirely account for all that happens to a cab-horse? Has he ever looked fairly at the fate of one of those beasts as it is dying—measured the work it has done, and the reward it has got—put his hand upon the bloody wounds through which its bones are piercing, and so looked up to Heaven with an entire understanding of Heaven's ways about the horse? Yet the horse is a fact—no dream—no revelation among the myrtle-trees by night; and the dust it dies upon, and the dogs that eat it, are facts; and yonder happy person, whose the horse was till its knees were broken over the hurdles, who had an immortal soul to begin with, and wealth and peace to help forward his immortality; who has also devoted the powers of his soul, and body, and wealth, and peace, to the spoiling of houses, the corruption of the innocent, and the oppression of the poor; and has, at this actual moment of his prosperous life, as many curses waiting

round about him in calm shadow, with their death's eyes fixed upon him, biding their time, as ever the poor cab-horse had launched at him in meaningless blasphemies, when his failing feet stumbled at the stones—this happy person shall have no stripes—shall have only the horse's fate of annihilation; or, if other things are indeed reserved for him, Heaven's kindness or omnipotence is to be doubted therefore.

§ 33. We cannot reason of these things. But this I know—and this may by all men be known—that no good or lovely thing exists in this world without its correspondent darkness; and that the universe presents itself continually to mankind under the stern aspect of warning, or of choice, the good and the evil set on the right hand and the left.

And in this mountain gloom, which weighs so strongly upon the human heart that in all time hitherto, as we have seen, the hill defiles have been either avoided in terror or inhabited in penance, there is but the fulfilment of the universal law, that where the beauty and wisdom of the Divine working are most manifested, there also are manifested most clearly the terror of God's wrath, and inevitableness of His power.

Nor is this gloom less wonderful so far as it bears witness to the error of human choice, even when the nature of good and evil is most definitely set before it. The trees of Paradise were fair; but our first parents hid themselves from God "in medio ligni Paradisi," in the midst of the trees of the garden. The hills were ordained for the help of man; but, instead of raising his eyes to the hills, from whence cometh his help, he does his idol sacrifice "upon every high hill and under every green tree." The mountain of the Lord's house is established above the hills; but Nadab and Abihu shall see under His feet the body of heaven in His clearness, yet go down to kindle the censer against their own souls.

And so to the end of time it will be; to the end, that cry will still be heard along the Alpine winds, "Hear, oh ye mountains, the Lord's controversy!" Still, their gulfs of thawless ice, and unretarded roar of tormented waves, and deathful falls of fruitless waste, and unredeemed decay, must be the image of the souls of those who have chosen the darkness, and whose cry shall be to the mountains to fall on them, and to the hills to cover them; and still, to the end of time, the clear waters of the unfailing springs, and the white pasture-lilies in their clothed multitude, and the abiding of the burning peaks in their nearness to the opened heaven, shall be the types, and the blessings of those who have chosen light, and of whom it is written, "The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, righteousness."

CHAPTER XX.

THE MOUNTAIN GLORY.

§ 1. I HAVE dwelt, in the foregoing chapter, on the sadness of the hills with the greater insistance that I feared my own excessive love for them might lead me into too favorable interpretation of their influences over the human heart; or, at least, that the reader might accuse me of fond prejudice, in the conclusions to which, finally, I desire to lead him concerning them. For, to myself, mountains are the beginning and the end of all natural scenery; in them, and in the forms of inferior landscape that lead to them, my affections are wholly bound up; and though I can look with happy admiration at the lowland flowers, and woods, and open skies, the happiness is tranquil and cold, like that of examining detached flowers in a conservatory, or reading a pleasant book; and if the scenery be resolutely level, insisting upon the declaration of its own flatness in all the detail of it, as in Holland, or Lincolnshire, or Central Lombardy, it appears to me like a prison, and I cannot long endure it. But the slightest rise and fall in the road,—a mossy bank at the side of a crag of chalk, with brambles at its brow, overhanging it,—a ripple over three or four stones in the stream by the bridge,—above all, a wild bit of ferny ground under a fir or two, looking as if, possibly, one might see a hill if one got to the other side of the trees, will instantly give me intense

delight, because the shadow, or the hope, of the hills is in them.

§ 2. And thus, although there are few districts of Northern Europe, however apparently dull or tame, in which I cannot find pleasure, though the whole of Northern France (except Champagne), dull as it seems to most travellers, is to me a perpetual Paradise; and, putting Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, and one or two such other perfectly flat districts aside, there is not an English county which I should not find entertainment in exploring the cross-roads of, foot by foot; yet all my best enjoyment would be owing to the imagination of the hills, coloring, with their far-away memories, every lowland stone and herb. The pleasant French côteau, green in the sunshine, delights me, either by what real mountain character it has in itself (for in extent and succession of promontory the flanks of the French valleys have quite the sublimity of true mountain distances), or by its broken ground and rugged steps among the vines, and rise of the leafage above, against the blue sky, as it might rise at Vevay or Como. There is not a wave of the Seine but is associated in my mind with the first rise of the sandstones and forest pines of Fontainebleau; and with the hope of the Alps, as one leaves Paris with the horses' heads to the southwest, the morning sun flashing on the bright waves at Charenton. If there be *no* hope or association of this kind, and if I cannot deceive myself into fancying that perhaps at the next rise of the road there may be seen the film of a blue hill in the gleam of sky at the horizon, the landscape, however beautiful, produces in me even a kind of sickness and pain; and the whole view from Richmond Hill or Windsor Terrace—nay, the gardens of Alcinous, with their perpetual summer—or of the Hesperides (if they were flat, and not close to Atlas), golden apples and all—I would give away in an instant,

for one mossy granite stone a foot broad, and two leaves of lady-fern.*

§ 3. I know that this is in great part idiosyncrasy; and that I must not trust to my own feelings, in this respect, as representative of the modern landscape instinct; yet I know it is not idiosyncrasy, in so far as there may be proved to be indeed an increase of the absolute beauty of all scenery in exact proportion to its mountainous character, providing that character be *healthily* mountainous. I do not mean to take the Col de Bon Homme as representative of hills, any more than I would take Romney Marsh as representative of plains; but putting Leicestershire or Staffordshire fairly beside Westmoreland, and Lombardy or Champagne fairly beside the Pays de Vaud or the Canton Berne, I find the increase in the calculable sum of elements of beauty to be steadily in proportion to the increase of mountainous character; and that the best image which the world can give of Paradise is in the slope of the meadows, orchards, and corn-fields on the sides of a great Alp, with its purple rocks and eternal snows above; this excellence not being in any wise a matter referable to feeling, or individual preferences, but de-

* In tracing the *whole* of the deep enjoyment to mountain association, I of course except whatever feelings are connected with the observance of rural life, or with that of architecture. None of these feelings arise out of the landscape, properly so-called: the pleasure with which we see a peasant's garden fairly kept, or a ploughman doing his work well, or a group of children playing at a cottage door, being wholly separate from that which we find in the fields or commons around them; and the beauty of architecture, or the associations connected with it, in like manner often ennobling the most tame scenery;—yet not so but that we may always distinguish between the abstract character of the unassisted landscape, and the charm which it derives from the architecture. Much of the majesty of French landscape consists in its grand and gray village churches and turreted farm-houses, not to speak of its cathedrals, castles, and beautifully placed cities.

monstrable by calm enumeration of the number of lovely colors on the rocks, the varied grouping of the trees, and quantity of noble incidents in stream, crag, or cloud, presented to the eye at any given moment.

§ 4. For consider, first, the difference produced in the whole tone of landscape color by the introductions of purple, violet, and deep ultramarine blue, which we owe to mountains. In an ordinary lowland landscape we have the blue of the sky; the green of grass, which I will suppose (and this is an unnecessary concession to the lowlands) entirely fresh and bright; the green of trees; and certain elements of purple, far more rich and beautiful than we generally should think, in their bark and shadows (bare hedges and thickets, or tops of trees, in subdued afternoon sunshine, are nearly perfect purple, and of an exquisite tone), as well as in ploughed fields, and dark ground in general. But among mountains, in *addition* to all this, large unbroken spaces of pure violet and purple are introduced in their distances; and even near, by films of cloud passing over the darkness of ravines or forests, blues are produced of the most subtle tenderness; these azures and purples * passing into rose-color of otherwise wholly unattainable delicacy among the upper summits, the blue of the sky being at the same time purer and deeper than in the plains. Nay, in some sense, a person who has never

* One of the principal reasons for the false supposition that Switzerland is not picturesque, is the error of most sketchers and painters in representing pine forest in middle distance as dark *green*, or gray green, whereas its true color is always purple, at distances of even two or three miles. Let any traveller coming down the Montanvert look for an aperture, three or four inches wide, between the near pine branches, through which, standing eight or ten feet from it, he can see the opposite forests on the Breven or Flegère. Those forests are not above two or two and a half miles from him; but he will find the aperture is filled by a tint of nearly pure azure or purple, not by green.

seen the rose-color of the rays of dawn crossing a blue mountain twelve or fifteen miles away, can hardly be said to know what *tenderness* in color means at all; *bright* tenderness he may, indeed, see in the sky or in a flower, but this grave tenderness of the far-away hill-purples he cannot conceive.

§ 5. Together with this great source of pre-eminence in *mass* of color, we have to estimate the influence of the finished inlaying and enamel-work of the color-jewelry on every stone; and that of the continual variety in species of flower; most of the mountain flowers being, besides, separately lovelier than the lowland ones. The wood hyacinth and wild rose are, indeed, the only *supreme* flowers that the lowlands can generally show; and the wild rose is also a mountaineer, and more fragrant in the hills, while the wood hyacinth, or grape hyacinth, at its best cannot match even the dark bell-gentian, leaving the light-blue star-gentian in its uncontested queenliness, and the Alpine rose and Highland heather wholly without similitude. The violet, lily of the valley, crocus, and wood anemone are, I suppose, claimable partly by the plains as well as the hills; but the large orange lily and narcissus I have never seen but on hill pastures, and the exquisite oxalis is pre-eminently a mountaineer.*

§ 6. To this supremacy in mosses and flowers we have next to add an inestimable gain in the continual presence and power of water. Neither in its clearness, its color, its fantasy of motion, its calmness of space, depth, and reflection, or its wrath, can water be conceived by a lowlander, out of sight of sea. A sea wave is far grander than any torrent—but of the sea and its influences we are not now speaking; and the sea itself, though it *can*

* The Savoyard's name for its flower, "Pain du Bon Dieu," is very beautiful; from, I believe, the supposed resemblance of its white and scattered blossom to the fallen manna.

be clear, is never calm, among our shores, in the sense that a mountain lake can be calm. The sea seems only to pause; the mountain lake to sleep, and to dream. Out of sight of the ocean a lowlander cannot be considered ever to have seen water at all. The mantling of the pools in the rock shadows, with the golden flakes of light sinking down through them like falling leaves, the ringing of the thin currents among the shallows, the flash and the cloud of the cascade, the earthquake and foam-fire of the cataract, the long lines of alternate mirror and mist that lull the imagery of the hills reversed in the blue of morning,—all these things belong to those hills as their undivided inheritance.

§ 7. To this supremacy in wave and stream is joined a no less manifest pre-eminence in the character of trees. It is possible among plains, in the species of trees which properly belong to them, the poplars of Amiens, for instance, to obtain a serene simplicity of grace, which, as I said, is a better help to the study of gracefulness, as such, than any of the wilder groupings of the hills; so also, there are certain conditions of symmetrical luxuriance developed in the park and avenue, rarely rivalled in their way among mountains; and yet the mountain superiority in foliage is, on the whole, nearly as complete as it is in water; for exactly as there are some expressions in the broad reaches of a navigable lowland river, such as the Loire or Thames, not, in their way, to be matched among the rock rivers, and yet for all that a lowlander cannot be said to have truly seen the element of water at all; so even in his richest parks and avenues he cannot be said to have truly seen trees. For the resources of trees are not developed until they have difficulty to contend with; neither their tenderness of brotherly love and harmony, till they are forced to choose their ways of various life where there is contracted room for them, talking to each other with their

restrained branches. The various action of trees rooting themselves in inhospitable rocks, stooping to look into ravines, hiding from the search of glacier winds, reaching forth to the rays of rare sunshine, crowding down together to drink at sweetest streams, climbing hand in hand among the difficult slopes, opening in sudden dances round the mossy knolls, gathering into companies at rest among the fragrant fields, gliding in grave procession over the heavenward ridges,—nothing of this can be conceived among the unvexed and unvaried felicities of the lowland forest: while to all these direct sources of greater beauty are added, first the power of redundance,—the mere quantity of foliage visible in the folds and on the promontories of a single Alp being greater than that of an entire lowland landscape (unless a view from some cathedral tower); and to this charm of redundance, that of clearer *visibility*, — tree after tree being constantly shown in successive height, one behind another, instead of the mere tops and flanks of masses, as in the plains; and the forms of multitudes of them continually defined against the clear sky, near and above, or against white clouds entangled among their branches, instead of being confused in dimness of distance.

§ 8. Finally, to this supremacy in foliage we have to add the still less questionable supremacy in clouds. There is no effect of sky possible in the lowlands which may not in equal perfection be seen among the hills; but there are effects by tens of thousands, forever invisible and inconceivable to the inhabitant of the plains, manifested among the hills in the course of one day. The mere power of familiarity with the clouds, of walking with them and above them, alters and renders clear our whole conception of the baseless architecture of the sky; and for the beauty of it, there is more in a single wreath of early cloud, pacing its way up an avenue of pines, or pausing among the points of their fringes,

than in all the white heaps that fill the arched sky of the plains from one horizon to the other. And of the nobler cloud manifestations, — the breaking of their troublous seas against the crags, their black spray sparkling with lightning; or the going forth of the morning along their pavements of moving marble, level-laid between dome and dome of snow; — of these things there can be as little imagination or understanding in an inhabitant of the plains as of the scenery of another planet than his own.

§ 9. And, observe, all these superiorities are matters plainly measurable and calculable, not in any wise to be referred to estimate of *sensation*. Of the grandeur or expression of the hills I have not spoken; how far they are great, or strong, or terrible, I do not for the moment consider, because vastness, and strength, and terror, are not to all minds subjects of desired contemplation. It may make no difference to some men whether a natural object be large or small, whether it be strong or feeble. But loveliness of color, perfectness of form, endlessness of change, wonderfulness of structure, are precious to all undiseased human minds; and the superiority of the mountains in all these things to the lowland is, I repeat, as measurable as the richness of a painted window matched with a white one, or the wealth of a museum compared with that of a simply furnished chamber. They seem to have been built for the human race, as at once their schools and cathedrals; full of treasures of illuminated manuscript for the scholar, kindly in simple lessons to the worker, quiet in pale cloisters for the thinker, glorious in holiness for the worshipper. And of these great cathedrals of the earth, with their gates of rock, pavements of cloud, choirs of stream and stone, altars of snow, and vaults of purple traversed by the continual stars, — of these, as we have seen, it was written, not long ago, by one of the best of the poor human

race for whom they were built, wondering in himself for whom their Creator *could* have made them, and thinking to have entirely discerned the Divine intent in them—"They are inhabited by the Beasts."

§ 10. Was it then indeed thus with us, and so lately? Had mankind offered no worship in their mountain churches? Was all that granite sculpture and floral painting done by the angels in vain?

Not so. It will need no prolonged thought to convince us that in the hills the purposes of their Maker have indeed been accomplished in such measure as, through the sin or folly of men, He ever permits them to be accomplished. It may not seem, from the general language held concerning them, or from any directly traceable results, that mountains have had serious influence on human intellect; but it will not, I think, be difficult to show that their occult influence has been both constant and essential to the progress of the race.

§ 11. Consider, first, whether we can justly refuse to attribute to their mountain scenery some share in giving the Greeks and Italians their intellectual lead among the nations of Europe.

There is not a single spot of land in either of these countries from which mountains are not discernible; almost always they form the principal feature of the scenery. The mountain outlines seen from Sparta, Corinth, Athens, Rome, Florence, Pisa, Verona, are of consummate beauty; and whatever dislike or contempt may be traceable in the mind of the Greeks for mountain ruggedness, their placing the shrine of Apollo under the cliffs of Delphi, and his throne upon Parnassus, was a testimony to all succeeding time that they themselves attributed the best part of their intellectual inspiration to the power of the hills. Nor would it be difficult to show that every great writer of either of those nations, however little definite regard he might manifest for the

landscape of his country, had been mentally formed and disciplined by it, so that even such enjoyment as Homer's of the ploughed ground and popular groves owes its intensity and delicacy to the excitement of the imagination produced, without his own consciousness, by other and grander features of the scenery to which he had been accustomed from a child; and differs in every respect from the tranquil, vegetative, and prosaic affection with which the same ploughed land and poplars would be regarded by a native of the Netherlands.

The vague expression which I have just used—"intellectual lead," may be expanded into four great heads: lead in Religion, Art and Literature, War, and Social Economy.

§ 12. It will be right to examine our subject eventually under these four heads; but I shall limit myself, for the present, to some consideration of the first two, for a reason presently to be stated.

1st. Influence of mountains on religious temperament.

I. We have before had occasion to note the peculiar awe with which mountains were regarded in the middle ages, as bearing continual witness against the frivolity or luxury of the world. Though the sense of this influence of theirs is perhaps more clearly expressed by the mediæval Christians than by any other sect of religionists, the influence itself has been constant in all time. Mountains have always possessed the power, first, of exciting religious enthusiasm; secondly, of purifying religious faith. These two operations are partly contrary to one another: for the faith of enthusiasm is apt to be *im*pure, and the mountains, by exciting morbid conditions of the imagination, have caused in great part the legendary and romantic forms of belief; on the other hand, by fostering simplicity of life and dignity of morals, they have purified by action what they falsified by imagination. But, even in their first and most dangerous influ-

ence, it is not the mountains that are to blame, but the human heart. While we mourn over the fictitious shape given to the religious visions of the anchorite, we may envy the sincerity and the depth of the emotion from which they spring: in the deep feeling, we have to acknowledge the solemn influences of the hills; but for the erring modes or forms of thought, it is human wilfulness, sin, and false teaching that are answerable. We are not to deny the nobleness of the imagination because its direction is illegitimate, nor the pathos of the legend because its circumstances are groundless; the ardor and abstraction of the spiritual life are to be honored in themselves, though the one may be misguided and the other deceived; and the deserts of Osma, Assisi, and Monte Viso are still to be thanked for the zeal they gave, or guarded, whether we find it in St. Francis and St. Dominic, or in those whom God's hand hid from them in the clefts of the rocks.

§ 13. And, in fact, much of the apparently harmful influence of hills on the religion of the world is nothing else than their general gift of exciting the poetical and inventive faculties, in peculiarly solemn tones of mind. Their terror leads into devotional casts of thought; their beauty and wildness prompt the invention at the same time; and where the mind is not gifted with stern reasoning powers, or protected by purity of teaching, it is sure to mingle the invention with its creed, and the vision with its prayer. Strictly speaking, we ought to consider the superstitions of the hills, universally, as a form of poetry; regretting only that men have not yet learned how to distinguish poetry from well-founded faith.

And if we do this, and enable ourselves thus to review, without carping or sneering, the shapes of solemn imagination which have arisen among the inhabitants of Europe, we shall find, on the one hand, the mountains of

Greece and Italy forming all the loveliest dreams, first of the Pagan, then of the Christian mythology; on the other, those of Scandinavia to be the first sources of whatever mental (as well as military) power was brought by the Normans into Southern Europe. Normandy itself is to all intents and purposes a hill country; composed, over large extents, of granite and basalt, often rugged and covered with heather on the summits, and traversed by beautiful and singular dells, at once soft and secluded, fruitful and wild. We have thus one branch of the Northern religious imagination rising among the Scandinavian fiords, tempered in France by various encounters with elements of Arabian, Italian, Provençal, or other Southern poetry, and then reacting upon Southern England; while other forms of the same rude religious imagination, resting like clouds upon the mountains of Scotland and Wales, met and mingled with the Norman Christianity, retaining even to the latest times some dark color of superstition, but giving all its poetical and military pathos to Scottish poetry, and a peculiar sternness and wildness of tone to the Reformed faith, in its manifestations among the Scottish hills.

§ 14. It is on less disputable ground that I may claim the reader's gratitude to the mountains, as having been the centres not only of imaginative energy, but of purity both in doctrine and practice. The enthusiasm of the persecuted Covenanter, and his variously modified claims to miraculous protection or prophetic inspiration, hold exactly the same relation to the smooth proprieties of lowland Protestantism, that the demon-combats, visions, and miracles of the mountain monk or anchorite hold to the wealth and worldliness of the Vatican. It might indeed happen, whether at Canterbury, Rheims, or Rome, that a good bishop should occasionally grasp the crozier; and a vast amount of prudent,

educated, and admirable piety is to be found among the ranks of the lowland clergy. But still the large aspect of the matter is always, among the Protestants, that formalism, respectability, orthodoxy, caution, and propriety, live by the slow stream that encircles the lowland abbey or cathedral; and that enthusiasm, poverty, vital faith, and audacity of conduct, characterize the pastor dwelling by the torrent side. In like manner, taking the large aspects of Romanism, we see that its worst corruptions, its cunning, its worldliness, and its permission of crime, are traceable for the most part to lowland prelacy; but its self-denials, its obediences, humilities, sincere claims to miraculous power, and faithful discharges of pastoral duty, are traceable chiefly to its anchorites and mountain clergy.

§ 15. It is true that the "Lady Poverty" of St. Francis may share the influence of the hills in the formation of character; and that, since the clergy who have little interest at court or conclave are those who in general will be driven to undertake the hill services, we must often attribute to enforced simplicity of life, or natural bitterness of feeling, some of the tones of thought which we might otherwise have ascribed to the influence of mountain scenery. Such causes, however, affect the lowland as much as the highland religious character in all districts far from cities; but they do not produce the same effects. The curate or hermit of the field and fen, however simple his life, or painful his lodging, does not often attain the spirit of the hill pastor or recluse: we may find in him a decent virtue or a contented ignorance, rarely the prophetic vision or the martyr's passion. Among the fair arable lands of England and Belgium extends an orthodox Protestantism or Catholicism; prosperous, creditable, and drowsy; but it is among the purple moors of the highland border, the ravines of Mont Genèvre, and the crags of the Tyrol, that

we shall find the simplest Evangelical faith, and the purest Romanist practice.

§ 16. Of course the inquiry into this branch of the hill influence is partly complicated with that into its operation on domestic habits and personal character, of which hereafter: but there is one curious witness borne to the general truth of the foregone conclusions, by an apparently slight, yet very significant circumstance in art. We have seen, in the preceding volume, how difficult it was sometimes to distinguish between honest painters, who truly chose to paint sacred subjects because they loved them, and the affected painters, who took sacred subjects for their own pride's sake, or for merely artistical delight. Amongst other means of arriving at a conclusion in this matter, there is one helpful test, which may be applied to their various works, almost as easily and certainly as a foot-rule could be used to measure their size; and which remains an available test down to the date of the rise of the Claudesque landscape schools. Nearly all the genuine religious painters use *steep mountain distances.* All the merely artistical ones, or those of intermediate temper, in proportion as they lose the religious element, use flat or simply architectural distances. Of course the law is liable to many exceptions, chiefly dependent on the place of birth and early associations of painters; but its force is, I think, strongly shown in this;—that, though the Flemish painters never showed any disposition to paint, *for its own sake*, other scenery than of their own land (compare Vol. III. Chap. XIII. § 20), the sincerely religious ones continually used Alpine distances, bright with snow. In like manner Giotto, Perugino, Angelico, the young Raphael, and John Bellini, always, if, with any fitness to their subject, they can introduce them, use craggy or blue mountain distances, and this with definite expression of love towards them; Leonardo, conventionally, as

feeling they were necessary for his sacred subjects, while yet his science and idealism had destroyed his mountain sincerity; Michael Angelo, wholly an artist, and Raphael in later years, show no love of mountains whatever, while the relative depths of feeling in Tintoret, Titian, and Veronese, are precisely measurable by their affection to mountains. Tintoret, though born in Venice, yet, because capable of the greatest reaches of feeling, is the first of the old painters who ever drew mountain detail rightly:* Titian, though born in Cadore, and recurring to it constantly, yet being more worldly-minded, uses his hills somewhat more conventionally, though, still in his most deeply felt pictures, such as the St. Jerome, in the Brera, giving to the rocks and forests a consummate nobleness; and Veronese, in his gay grasp of the outside aspects of the world, contentedly includes his philosophy within porticos and pillars, or at the best overshadows it with a few sprays of laurel.

§ 17. The test fails, however, utterly, when applied to the later or transitional landscape schools, mountains being there introduced in mere wanton savageness by Salvator, or vague conventionalism by Claude, Berghem, and hundreds more. This need not, however, in the least invalidate our general conclusions: we surely know already that it is possible to misuse the best gifts, and pervert the purest feelings; nor need we doubt the real purpose, or, on honest hearts, the real effect, of mountains, because various institutions have been founded among them by the banditti of Calabria, as well as by St. Bruno.

§ 18. I cannot leave this part of my subject without recording a slight incident which happened to myself, singularly illustrative of the religious character of the

* See reference to his painting of stones in the last note to § 28 of the chapter on Imagination Penetrative, Vol. II.

Alpine peasant when under favorable circumstances of teaching. I was coming down one evening from the Rochers de Naye, above Montreux, having been at work among the limestone rocks, where I could get no water, and both weary and thirsty. Coming to a spring at a turn of the path, conducted, as usual, by the herdsmen into a hollowed pine-trunk I stooped to it and drank deeply: as I raised my head, drawing breath heavily, some one behind me said, "Celui qui doira de cette eau-ci, aura encore soif." I turned, not understanding for the moment what was meant; and saw one of the hill-peasants, probably returning to his châlet from the market-place at Vevay or Villeneuve. As I looked at him with an uncomprehending expression, he went on with the verse:—"Mais celui qui boira de l'eau que je lui donnerai, n'aura jamais soif."

I doubt if this would have been thought of, or said, by even the most intelligent lowland peasant. The thought might have occurred to him, but the frankness of address, and expectation of being at once understood without a word of preparative explanation, as if the language of the Bible were familiar to all men, mark, I think, the mountaineer.

§ 19. We were next to examine the influence of hills on the artistical power of the human race. Which power, so far as it depends on the imagination, must evidently be fostered by the same influences which give vitality to religious vision. But, so far as artistical productiveness and skill are concerned, it is evident that the mountaineer is at a radical and insurmountable disadvantage. The strength of his character depends upon the absence of luxury; but it is eminently by luxury that art is supported. We are not, therefore, to deny the mountain influence, because we do not find finished frescoes on the timbers of châlets or delicate bas-reliefs on the bastion which pro-

2d. Influence of mountain on artistical power.

tects the mountain church from the avalanche; but to consider how far the tone of mind shown by the artists laboring in the lowland is dependent for its intensity on the distant influences of the hills, whether during the childhood of those born among them, or under the casual contemplation of men advanced in life.

§ 20. Glancing broadly over the strength of the mediæval—that is to say, of the peculiar and energetic—art of Europe, so as to discern, through the clear flowing of its waves over France, Italy, and England, the places in the pool where the fountain-heads are, and where the sand dances, I should first point to Normandy and Tuscany. From the cathedral of Pisa, and the sculpture of the Pisans, the course is straight to Giotto, Angelico, and Raphael,—to Orcagna and Michael Angelo;—the Venetian school, in many respects mightier, being, nevertheless, subsequent and derivative. From the cathedrals of Caen and Coutances the course is straight to the Gothic of Chartres and Notre Dame of Paris, and thence forward to all French and English noble art, whether ecclesiastical or domestic. Now the mountain scenery about Pisa is precisely the most beautiful that surrounds any great Italian city, owing to the wonderful outlines of the peaks of Carrara. Milan and Verona have indeed fine ranges in sight, but rising farther in the distance, and therefore not so directly affecting the popular mind. The Norman imagination, as already noticed, is Scandinavian in origin, and fostered by the lovely granite scenery of Normandy itself. But there is, nevertheless, this great difference between French art and Italian, that the French paused strangely at a certain point, as the Norman hills are truncated at the summits, while the Italian rose steadily to a vertex, as the Carrara hills to their crests. Let us observe this a little more in detail.

§ 21. The sculpture of the Pisans was taken up and

carried into various perfection by the Lucchese, Pistojans, Sienese, and Florentines. All these are inhabitants of truly mountain cities, Florence being as completely among the hills as Innspruck is, only the hills have softer outlines. Those around Pistoja and Lucca are in a high degree majestic. Giotto was born and bred among these hills. Angelico lived upon their slope. The mountain towns of Perugia and Urbino furnish the only important branches of correlative art; for Leonardo, however individually great, originated no new school; he only carried the *executive* delicacy of landscape detail so far beyond other painters as to necessitate my naming the fifteenth-century manner of landscape after him, though he did not invent it; and although the school of Milan is distinguished by several peculiarities, and definitely enough separable from the other schools of Italy, all its peculiarities are mannerisms, not inventions.

Correggio, indeed, created a new school, though he himself is almost its only master. I have given in the preceding volume the mountain outline seen from Parma. But the only entirely great group of painters after the Tuscans are the Venetians, and they are headed by Titian and Tintoret, on whom we have noticed the influence of hills already; and although we cannot trace it in Paul Veronese, I will not quit the mountain claim upon him; for I believe all that gay and gladdening strength of his was fed by the breezes of the hills of Garda, and brightened by the swift glancing of the waves of the Adige.*

§ 22. Observe, however, before going farther, of all the painters we have named, the one who obtains most executive perfection is Leonardo, who on the whole lived at the greatest distance from the hills. The two who

* In saying this I do not, of course, forget the influence of the sea on the Pisans and Venetians; but that is a separate subject, and must be examined in the next volume.

have most feeling are Giotto and Angelico, both hill-bred. And generally, I believe, we shall find that the hill country gives its inventive depths of feeling to art, as in the work of Orcagna, Perugino, and Angelico, and the plain country executive neatness. The executive precision is joined with feeling in Leonardo, who saw the Alps in the distance; it is totally unaccompanied by feeling in the pure Dutch schools, or schools of the dead flats.

§ 23. I do not know if any writer on art, or on the development of national mind, has given his attention to what seems to me one of the most singular phenomena in the history of Europe,—the pause of the English and French in pictorial art after the fourteenth century. From the days of Henry III. to those of Elizabeth, and of Louis IX. to those of Louis XIV., the general intellect of the two nations was steadily on the increase. But their art intellect was as steadily retrograde. The only art work that France and England have done nobly is that which is centralized by the Cathedral of Lincoln, and the Sainte Chapelle. We had at that time (*we* French and English—but the French first) the incontestable lead among European nations; no thirteenth-century work in Italy is comparable for majesty of conception, or wealth of imaginative detail, to the cathedrals of Chartres, Rheims, Rouen, Amiens, Lincoln, Peterborough, Wells, or Lichfield. But every hour of the fourteenth century saw French and English art in precipitate decline, Italian in steady ascent; and by the time that painting and sculpture had developed themselves in an approximated perfection, in the work of Ghirlandajo and Mino of Fésole, we had in France and England no workman, in any art, deserving a workman's name; nothing but skilful masons, with more or less love of the picturesque, and redundance of undisciplined imagination, flaming itself away in wild and rich trace-

ries, and crowded bosses of grotesque figure sculpture, and expiring at last in barbarous imitation of the perfected skill and erring choice of Renaissance Italy. Painting could not decline, for it had not reached any eminence; the exquisite arts of illumination and glass design had led to no effective results in other materials; they themselves, incapable of any higher perfection than they had reached in the thirteenth century, perished in the vain endeavor to emulate pictorial excellence, bad *drawing* being substituted, in books, for lovely *writing*, and opaque precision, in glass, for transparent power; nor in any single department of exertion did artists arise of such calibre or class as any of the great Italians; and yet all the while, in literature, *we* were gradually and steadily advancing in power up to the time of Shakespere; the Italians, on the contrary, not advancing after the time of Dante.

§ 24. Of course I have no space here to pursue a question such as this; but I may state my belief that *one* of the conditions involved in it was the mountain influence of Italian scenery, inducing a disposition to such indolent or enthusiastic reverie, as could only express itself in the visions of art; while the comparatively flat scenery and severer climate of England and France, fostering less enthusiasm, and urging to more exertion, brought about a practical and rational temperament, progressive in policy, science, and literature, but wholly retrograde in art; that is to say (for great art may be properly so defined), in the Art of *Dreaming*.

§ 25. III. In admitting this, we seem to involve the supposition that mountain influence is either unfavorable or inessential to literary power; but for this also the mountain influence is still necessary, only in a subordinate degree. It is true, indeed, that the Avon is no mountain torrent, and that the hills round the vale of Stratford are not

3d. Influence of mountains on literary power.

sublime; true, moreover, that the cantons Berne or Uri have never yet, so far as I know, produced a great poet; but neither, on the other hand, has Antwerp or Amsterdam. And, I believe, the natural scenery which will be found, on the whole, productive of most literary intellect is that mingled of hill and plain, as all available light is of flame and darkness; the flame being the active element, and the darkness the tempering one.

§ 26. In noting such evidence as bears upon this subject, the reader must always remember that the mountains are at an unfair disadvantage, in being much *out of the way* of the masses of men employed in intellectual pursuits. The position of a city is dictated by military necessity or commercial convenience; it rises, flourishes, and absorbs into its activity whatever leading intellect is in the surrounding population. The persons who are able and desirous to give their children education naturally resort to it; the best schools, the best society, and the strongest motives assist and excite those born within its walls; and youth after youth rises to distinction out of its streets, while among the blue mountains, twenty miles away, the goatherds live and die in unregarded lowliness. And yet this is no proof that the mountains have little effect upon the mind, or that the streets have a helpful one. The men who are formed by the schools, and polished by the society of the capital, may yet in many ways have their powers shortened by the absence of natural scenery; and the mountaineer, neglected, ignorant, and unambitious, may have been taught things by the clouds and streams which he could not have learned in a college, or a coterie.

§ 27. And in reasoning about the effect of mountains we are therefore under a difficulty like that which would occur to us if we had to determine the good or bad effect of light on the human constitution, in some place where all corporal exercise was necessarily in partial darkness,

and only idle people lived in the light. The exercise might give an advantage to the occupants of the gloom, but we should neither be justified in therefore denying the preciousness of light in general, nor the necessity to the workers of the few rays they possessed; and thus I suppose the hills around Stratford, and such glimpses as Shakspeare had of sandstone and pines in Warwickshire, or of chalk cliffs in Kent, to have been essential to the development of his genius. This supposition can only be proved false by the rising of a Shakspeare at Rotterdam or Bergen-op-Zoom, which I think not probable; whereas, on the other hand, it is confirmed by myriads of collateral evidences. The matter could only be *tested* by placing for half a century the British universities at Keswick, and Beddgelert, and making Grenoble the capital of France; but if, throughout the history of Britain and France, we contrast the general invention and pathetic power, in ballads or legends, of the inhabitants of the Scottish Border with those manifested in Suffolk or Essex; and similarly the inventive power of Normandy, Provence, and the Bearnois with that of Champagne or Picardy, we shall obtain some convincing evidence respecting the operation of hills on the masses of mankind, and be disposed to admit, with less hesitation, that the apparent inconsistencies in the effect of scenery on greater minds proceed in each case from specialties of education, accident, and original temper, which it would be impossible to follow out in detail. Sometimes only, when the original resemblance in character of intellect is very marked in two individuals, and they are submitted to definitely contrary circumstances of education, an approximation to evidence may be obtained. Thus Bacon and Pascal appear to be men naturally very similar in their temper and powers of mind. One, born in York House, Strand, of courtly parents, educated in court atmosphere, and replying,

almost as soon as he could speak, to the queen asking how old he was—"Two years younger than Your Majesty's happy reign!"—has the world's meanness and cunning engrafted into his intellect, and remains smooth, serene, unenthusiastic, and in some degree base, even with all his sincere devotion and universal wisdom; bearing, to the end of life, the likeness of a marble palace in the street of a great city, fairly furnished within, and bright in wall and battlement, yet noisome in places about the foundations. The other, born at Clermont, in Auvergne, under the shadow of the Puy de Dôme, though taken to Paris at eight years old, retains forever the impress of his birthplace; pursuing natural philosophy with the same zeal as Bacon, he returns to his own mountains to put himself under their tutelage, and by their help first discovers the great relations of the earth and the air: struck at last with mortal disease; gloomy, enthusiastic, and superstitious, with a conscience burning like lava, and inflexible like iron, the clouds gather about the majesty of him, fold after fold; and, with his spirit buried in ashes, and rent by earthquake, yet fruitful of true thought and faithful affection, he stands like that mound of desolate scoria that crowns the hill ranges of his native land, with its sable summit far in heaven, and its foundations green with the ordered garden and the trellised vine.

§ 28. When, however, our inquiry thus branches into the successive analysis of individual characters, it is time for us to leave it; noting only one or two points respecting Shakspeare, whom, I doubt not, the reader was surprised to find left out of all our comparisons in the preceding volume. He seems to have been sent essentially to take universal and equal grasp of the *human* nature; and to have been removed, therefore, from all influences which could in the least warp or bias his thoughts. It was necessary that he should lean *no*

way; that he should contemplate, with absolute equality of judgment, the life of the court, cloister, and tavern, and be able to sympathize so completely with all creatures as to deprive himself, together with his personal identity, even of his conscience, as he casts himself into their hearts. He must be able to enter into the soul of Falstaff or Shylock with no more sense of contempt or horror than Falstaff or Shylock themselves feel for or in themselves; otherwise his own conscience and indignation would make him unjust to them; he would turn aside from something, miss some good, or overlook some essential palliation. He must be utterly without anger, utterly without purpose; for if a man has any serious purpose in life, that which runs counter to it, or is foreign to it, will be looked at frowningly or carelessly by him. Shakspeare was forbidden of Heaven to have any *plans*. To *do* any good or *get* any good, in the common sense of good, was not to be within his permitted range of work. Not, for him, the founding of institutions, the preaching of doctrines, or the repression of abuses. Neither he, nor the sun, did on any morning that they rose together, receive charge from their Maker concerning such things. They were both of them to shine on the evil and good; both to behold unoffendedly all that was upon the earth, to burn unappalled upon the spears of kings, and undisdaining, upon the reeds of the river.

§ 29. Therefore, so far as nature had influence over the early training of this man, it was essential to his perfectness that the nature should be quiet. No mountain passions were to be allowed in him. Inflict upon him but one pang of the monastic conscience; cast upon him but one cloud of the mountain gloom; and his serenity had been gone forever—his equity—his infinity. You would have made another Dante of him; and all that he would have ever uttered about poor, soiled, and frail humanity

would have been the quarrel between Sinon and Adam of Brescia,—speedily retired from, as not worthy a man's hearing, nay, not to be heard without heavy fault. All your Falstaffs, Slenders, Quicklys, Sir Tobys, Lances, Touchstones, and Quinces would have been lost in that. Shakspeare could be allowed no mountains; nay, not even any supreme natural beauty. He had to be left with his kingcups and clover;—pansies—the passing clouds—the Avon's flow—and the undulating hills and woods of Warwick; nay, he was not to love even these in any exceeding measure, lest it might make him in the least overrate their power upon the strong, full-fledged minds of men. He makes the quarrelling fairies concerned about them; poor lost Ophelia find some comfort in them; fearful, fair, wise-hearted Perdita trust the speaking of her good will and good hostess-ship to them; and one of the brothers of Imogen confide his sorrow to them,—rebuked instantly by his brother for "wench-like words;" * but any thought of them in his

* "With fairest flowers
While summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
I'll sweeten thy sad grave. Thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face—pale primrose, nor
The azured harebell—like thy veins; no, nor
The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,
Outsweetened not thy breath. The ruddock would
With charitable bill bring thee all this;
Yea, and furred moss besides, when flowers are none,
To winter-ground thy corse.
Gui. Prithee, have done,
And do not play in wench-like words with that
Which is so serious."

Imogen herself, afterwards in deeper passion, will give weeds—not flowers—and something more:

"And when
With wildwood leaves, and weeds, I have strewed his grave,
And on it said a century of prayers,
Such as I can, twice o'er, I'll weep, and sigh,
And, leaving so his service, follow you."

mighty men I do not find: it is not usually in the nature of such men; and if he had loved the flowers the *least* better himself, he would assuredly have been offended at this, and given a botanical turn of mind to Cæsar, or Othello.

§ 30. And it is even among the most curious proofs of the necessity to all high imagination that it should paint straight from the life, that he has *not* given such a turn of mind to some of his great men;—Henry the Fifth, for instance. Doubtless some of my readers, having been accustomed to hear it repeated thoughtlessly from mouth to mouth that Shakspeare conceived the spirit of all ages, were as much offended as surprised at my saying that he only painted human nature as he saw it in his own time. They will find, if they look into his work closely, as much antiquarianism as they do geography, and no more. The commonly received notions about the things that had been, Shakspeare took as he found them, animating them with pure human nature, of any time and all time; but inquiries into the minor detail of temporary feeling, he despised as utterly as he did maps; and wheresoever the temporary feeling was in anywise contrary to that of his own day, he errs frankly, and paints from his own time. For instance, in this matter of love of flowers; we have traced already, far enough for our general purposes, the mediæval interest in them, whether to be enjoyed in the fields, or to be used for types of ornamentation in dress. If Shakspeare had cared to enter into the spirit even of the early fifteenth century, he would assuredly have marked this affection in some of his knights, and indicated, even then, in heroic tempers, the peculiar respect for loveliness of *dress* which we find constantly in Dante. But he could not do this; he had not seen it in real life. In his time dress had become an affectation and absurdity. Only fools, or wise men in their weak moments,

showed much concern about it; and the facts of human nature which appeared to him general in the matter were the soldier's disdain, and the coxcomb's care of it. Hence Shakspeare's good soldier is almost always in plain or battered armor; even the speech of Vernon in "Henry the Fourth," which, as far as I remember, is the only one that bears fully upon the beauty of armor, leans more upon the spirit and hearts of men—"bated, like eagles having lately bathed;" and has an undercurrent of slight contempt running through the following line, "Glittering in golden coats, *like images;*" while the beauty of the young Harry is essentially the beauty of fiery and perfect youth, answering as much to the Greek, or Roman, or Elizabethan knight as to the mediæval one; whereas the definite interest in armor and dress is opposed by Shakspeare in the French (meaning to depreciate them), to the English rude soldierliness:

"*Con.* Tut, I have the best armor in the world. Would it were day!

Orl. You have an excellent armor, but let my horse have his due."

And again:

"My lord constable, the armor that I saw in your tent to-night, are those stars, or suns, upon it?"

while Henry, half proud of his poorness of array, speaks of armorial splendor scornfully; the main idea being still of its being a gilded show and vanity—

"Our gayness and our *gilt* are all besmirched."

This is essentially Elizabethan. The quarterings on a knight's shield, or the inlaying of his armor, would never have been thought of by him as mere "gayness or gilt" in earlier days.* In like manner, throughout

* If the reader thinks that in Henry the Fifth's time the Elizabethan temper might already have been manifesting itself, let him compare

every scale of rank or feeling, from that of the French knights down to Falstaff's "I looked he should have sent me two-and-twenty yards of satin, as I am true knight, and he sends me security!" care for dress is always considered by Shakspeare as contemptible; and Mrs. Quickly distinguishes herself from a true fairy by her solicitude to scour the *chairs of order*—and "each fair instalment, coat, and several crest;" and the association in her mind of the flowers in the fairy rings with the

> "Sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery,
> Buckled below fair knighthood's bending knee;"

while the true fairies, in field simplicity, are only anxious to "sweep the dust behind the door;" and

> "With this field dew consecrate,
> Every several chamber bless
> Through this palace with sweet peace."

Note the expression "Field dew consecrate." Shakspeare loved courts and camps; but he felt that sacredness and peace were in the dew of the Fields only.

§ 31. There is another respect in which he was wholly incapable of entering into the spirit of the middle ages. He had no great art of any kind around him in his own country, and was, consequently, just as powerless to conceive the general influence of former art, as a man of the most inferior calibre. Therefore it was, that I did not care to quote his authority respecting the power of imitation, in the second chapter of the preceding volume. If it had been needful to add his testimony to that of Dante (given in § 5), I might have quoted multitudes of passages wholly concurring with that, of which

the English herald's speech, act 2, scene 2, of King John; and by way of specimen of Shakspeare's historical care, or regard of mediæval character, the large use of *artillery* in the previous scene.

the "fair Portia's counterfeit," with the following lines, and the implied ideal of sculpture in the "Winter's Tale," are wholly unanswerable instances. But Shakspeare's evidence in matters of art is as narrow as the range of Elizabethan art in England, and resolves itself wholly into admiration of two things,—mockery of life (as in this instance of Hermione as a statue), or absolute splendor, as in the close of "Romeo and Juliet," where the notion of *gold* as the chief source of dignity of aspect, coming down to Shakspeare from the times of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and, as I said before, strictly Elizabethan, would interfere seriously with the pathos of the whole passage, but for the sense of sacrifice implied in it:

> "As rich shall *Romeo* by his lady lie
> Poor sacrifices of our enmity."

§ 32. And observe, I am not giving these examples as proof of any smallness in Shakspeare, but of his greatness; that is to say, of his contentment, like every other great man who ever breathed, to paint nothing but *what he saw;* and therefore giving perpetual evidence that his sight was of the sixteenth, and not of the thirteenth century, beneath all the broad and eternal humanity of his imagination. How far in these modern days, emptied of splendor, it may be necessary for great men having certain sympathies for those earlier ages, to act in this differently from all their predecessors; and how far they may succeed in the resuscitation of the past by habitually dwelling in all their thoughts among vanished generations, are questions, of all practical and present ones concerning art, the most difficult to decide; for already in poetry several of our truest men have set themselves to this task, and have indeed put more vitality into the shadows of the dead than most others can give the presences of the living. Thus Longfellow, in

"The Golden Legend," has entered more closely into the temper of the Monk, for good and for evil, than ever yet theological writer or historian, though they may have given their life's labor to the analysis: and, again, Robert Browning is unerring in every sentence he writes of the Middle Ages; always vital, right, and profound; so that in the matter of art, with which we have been specially concerned, there is hardly a principle connected with the mediæval temper, that he has not struck upon in those seemingly careless and too rugged rhymes of his. There is a curious instance, by the way, in a short poem referring to this very subject of tomb and image sculpture; and illustrating just one of those phases of local human character which, though belonging to Shakspeare's own age, he never noticed, because it was specially Italian and un-English; connected also closely with the influence of mountains on the heart, and therefore with our immediate inquiries. I mean the kind of admiration with which a southern artist regarded the *stone* he worked in; and the pride which populace or priest took in the possession of precious mountain substance, worked into the pavements of their cathedrals, and the shafts of their tombs.

§ 33. Observe, Shakspeare, in the midst of architecture and tombs of wood, or freestone, or brass, naturally thinks of *gold* as the best enriching and ennobling substance for them;—in the midst also of the fever of the Renaissance he writes, as everyone else did, in praise of precisely the most vicious master of that school—Giulio Romano; but the modern poet, living much in Italy, and quit of the Renaissance influence, is able fully to enter into the Italian feeling, and to see the evil of the Renaissance tendency, not because he is greater than Shakspeare, but because he is in another element, and has *seen* other things. I miss fragments here and there not needed for my purpose in the passage quoted, with-

out putting asterisks, for I weaken the poem enough by the omissions, without spoiling it also by breaks.

"*The Bishop orders his tomb in St. Praxed's Church.*

"As here I lie
In this state chamber, dying by degrees,
Hours, and long hours, in the dead night, I ask,
Do I live—am I dead? Peace, peace, seems all:
St. Praxed's ever was the church for peace.
And so, about this tomb of mine. I fought
With tooth and nail to save my niche, ye know;
Old Gandolf* cozened me, despite my care.
Shrewd was that snatch from out the corner south
He graced his carrion with.
Yet still my niche is not so cramped but thence
One sees the pulpit o' the epistle side,
And somewhat of the choir, those silent seats;
And up into the aery dome where live
The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to lurk.
And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,
With those nine columns round me, two and two.
The odd one at my feet, where Anselm† stands;
Peach-blossom marble all.
Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years:
Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?
Did I say basalt for my slab, sons? Black—
'Twas ever antique-black‡ I meant! How else
Shall ye contrast my frieze to come beneath?
The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me,
Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and perchance
Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,
The Saviour at his sermon on the mount,
St. Praxed in a glory, and one Pan,
And Moses with the tables . . . but I know
Ye mark me not! What do they whisper thee,

*The last bishop. †His favorite son; nominally his nephew.

‡"Nero Antico" is more familiar to our ears; but Browning does right in translating it; as afterwards "cipollino" into "onion-stone." Our stupid habit of using foreign words without translation is continually losing us half the force of the foreign language. How many travellers hearing the term "cipollino" recognize the intended sense of a stone splitting into concentric coats, like an onion?

> Child of my bowels, Anselm? Ah, ye hope
> To revel down my villas while I gasp,
> Bricked o'er with beggar's mouldy travertine,
> Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles at!
> Nay, boys, ye love me—all of jasper, then!
> There's plenty jasper somewhere in the world—
> And have I not St. Praxed's ear to pray
> Horses for ye, and brown Greek manuscripts.
> That's if he carve my epitaph aright,
> Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's every word,
> No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line—
> Tully, my master's? Ulpian serves *his* need."

§ 34. I know no other piece of modern English, prose or poetry, in which there is so much told, as in these lines, of the Renaissance spirit,—its worldliness, inconsistency, pride, hypocrisy, ignorance of itself, love of art, of luxury, and of good Latin. It is nearly all that I said of the central Renaissance in thirty pages of the "Stones of Venice" put into as many lines, Browning's being also the antecedent work. The worst of it is that this kind of concentrated writing needs so much *solution* before the reader can fairly get the good of it, that people's patience fails them, and they give the thing up as insoluble; though, truly, it ought to be to the current of common thought like Saladin's talisman, dipped in clear water, not soluble altogether, but making the element medicinal.

§ 35. It is interesting, by the way, with respect to this love of stones in the Italian mind, to consider the difference necessitated in the English temper merely by the general domestic use of wood instead of marble. In that old Shakspearean England, men must have rendered a grateful homage to their oak forests, in the sense of all that they owed to their goodly timbers in the wainscot and furniture of the rooms they loved best, when the blue of the frosty midnight was contrasted, in the dark diamonds of the lattice, with the glowing brown of

the warm, fire-lighted, crimson-tapestried walls. Not less would an Italian look with a grateful regard on the hill summits, to which he owed, in the scorching of the summer noonday, escape into the marble corridor or crypt palpitating only with cold and smooth variegation of the unfevered mountain veins. In some sort, as, both in our stubbornness and our comfort, we not unfitly describe ourselves typically as Hearts of Oak, the Italians might in their strange and variegated mingling of passion, like purple color, with a cruel sternness, like white rock, truly describe themselves as Hearts of Stone.

§ 36. Into this feeling about marble in domestic use, Shakespere, having seen it even in northern luxury, could partly enter, and marks it in several passages of his Italian plays. But if the reader still doubts his limitation to his own experience in all subjects of imagination, let him consider how the removal from mountain influence in his youth, so necessary for the perfection of his lower human sympathy, prevented him from ever rendering with any force the feelings of the mountain anchorite, or indicating in any of his monks the deep spirit of monasticism. Wordly cardinals or nuncios he can fathom to the uttermost; but where, in all his thoughts, do we find St. Francis, or Abbot Samson? The "Friar" of Shakspeare's plays is almost the only stage conventionalism which he admitted; generally nothing more than a weak old man who lives in a cell, and has a rope about his waist.

§ 37. While, finally, in such slight allusions as he makes to mountain scenery itself, it is very curious to observe the accurate limitation of his sympathies to such things as he had known in his youth; and his entire preference of human interest, and of courtly and kingly dignities to the nobleness of the hills. This is most marked in Cymbeline, where the term "mountaineer" is, as with Dante, always one of reproach; and the noble

birth of Aviragus and Guiderius is shown by their holding their mountain cave as

> "A cell of ignorance; travelling abed.
> A prison for a debtor;"

and themselves, educated among hills, as in all things contemptible:

> "We are beastly; subtle as the fox, for prey;
> Like warlike as the wolf, for what we eat:
> Our valor is to chase what flies; our cage
> We make our choir, as doth the prisoned bird."

A few phrases occur here and there which might justify the supposition that he had seen high mountains, but never implying awe or admiration. Thus Demetrius:

> 'These things seem *small* and *indistinguishable*,
> *Like far off mountains, turned into clouds.*"

"Taurus snow," and the "frosty Caucasus," are used merely as types of purity or cold; and though the avalanche is once spoken of as an image of power, it is with instantly following depreciation:

> "Rush on his host, as doth the melted snow
> Upon the valleys, whose low vassal seat
> The Alps doth spit and void his rheum upon."

§ 38. There was only one thing belonging to hills that Shakspeare seemed to feel as noble—the pine tree, and that was because he had seen it in Warwickshire, clumps of pine occasionally rising on little sandstone mounds, as at the place of execution of Piers Gaveston, above the lowland woods. He touches on this tree fondly again and again.

> "As rough,
> Their royal blood enchafed, as the rud'st wind,
> That by his top doth take the mountain pine,
> And make him stoop to the vale."

> "The strong-based promontory
> Have I made shake, and by the spurs plucked up
> The pine and cedar."

Where note his observance of the peculiar horizontal roots of the pine, spurred as it is by them like the claw of a bird, and partly propped, as the aiguilles by those rock promontories at their bases which I have always called their spurs, this observance of the pine's strength and animal-like grasp being the chief reason for his choosing it, above all other trees, for Ariel's prison. Again:

> "You may as well forbid the mountain pines
> To wag their high tops, and to make no noise
> When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven."

And yet again:

> "But when, from under this terrestrial ball,
> He fires the proud tops of the eastern pines."

We may judge, by the impression which this single feature of hill scenery seems to have made on Shakspeare's mind, because he had seen it in his youth, how his whole temper would have been changed if he had lived in a more sublime country, and how essential it was to his power of contemplation of mankind that he should be removed from the sterner influences of nature. For the rest, so far as Shakspeare's work has imperfections of any kind,—the trivialness of many of his adopted plots, for instance, and the comparative rarity with which he admits the ideal of an enthusiastic virtue arising out of principle; virtue being with him for the most part founded simply on the affections joined with inherent purity in his women or on mere manly pride and honor in his men;*—in a word, whatever difference, involving

* I mean that Shakspeare almost always implies a total difference in *nature* between one human being and another; one being from the birth, pure and affectionate, another base and cruel; and he displays

inferiority, there exists between him and Dante, in his conceptions of the relation between this world and the next, we may partly trace, as we did the difference between Bacon and Pascal, to the less noble character of the scenes around him in his youth; and admit that, though it was necessary for his special work that he should be put, as it were, on a level with his race, on those plains of Stratford, we should see in this a proof, instead of a negation, of the mountain power over human intellect. For breadth and perfectness of condescending sight, the Shakspearean mind stands alone; but in *ascending* sight it is limited. The breadth of grasp is innate; the stoop and slightness of it was given by the circumstances of scene; and the difference between those careless masques

each, in its sphere, as having the nature of dove, wolf, or lion, never much implying the government or change of nature by any external principle. There can be no question that in the main he is right in this view of human nature; still, the other form of virtue does exist occasionally, and was never, as far as I recollect, taken much note of by him. And with this stern view of humanity, Shakspeare joined a sorrowful view of Fate, closely resembling that of the ancients. He is distinguished from Dante eminently by his always dwelling on last causes instead of first causes. Dante invariably points to the moment of the soul's choice which fixed its fate, to the instant of the day when it read no farther, or determined to give bad advice about Penestrino. But Shakspeare always leans on the force of Fate, as it urges the final evil; and dwells with infinite bitterness on the power of the wicked, and the infinitude of result dependent seemingly on little things. A fool brings the last piece of news from Verona, and the dearest lives of its noble houses are lost; they might have been saved if the sacristan had not stumbled as he walked. Othello mislays his handkerchief, and there remains nothing for him but death. Hamlet gets hold of the wrong foil, and the rest is silence. Edmund's runner is a moment too late at the prison, and the feather will not move at Cordelia's lips. Salisbury a moment too late at the tower, and Arthur lies on the stones dead. Goneril and Iago have, on the whole, in this world, Shakspeare sees, much their own way, though they come to a bad end. It is a pin that Death pierces the king's fortress wall with; and Carelessness and Folly sit sceptred and dreadful, side by side with the pin-armed skeleton.

of heathen gods, or unbelieved though mightily conceived visions of fairy, witch, or risen spirit, and the earnest faith of Dante's vision of Paradise, is the true measure of the difference in influence between the willowy banks of Avon, and the purple hills of Arno.

§ 39. Our third inquiry, into the influence of mountains on domestic and military character, was, we said, to be deferred; for this reason, that it is too much involved with the consideration of the influence of simple rural life in unmountainous districts, to be entered upon with advantage until we have examined the general beauty of vegetation, whether lowland or mountainous. I hope to pursue this inquiry, therefore, at the close of the next volume; only desiring, in the meantime, to bring one or two points connected with it under the consideration of our English travellers.

§ 40. For, it will be remembered, we first entered on this subject in order to obtain some data as to the possibility of a Practical Idea in Swiss life, correspondent, in some measure, to the poetical ideal of the same, which so largely entertains the European public. Of which possibility, I do not think, after what we have even already seen of the true effect of mountains on the human mind, there is any reason to doubt, even if that ideal had not been presented to us already in some measure, in the older life of the Swiss republics. But of its possibility, *under present circumstances*, there is, I grieve to say, the deepest reason to doubt; and that the more, because the question is not whether the mountaineer can be raised into a happier life by the help of the active nations of the plains; but whether he can yet be protected from the infection of the folly and vanity of those nations. I urged, in the preceding chapter, some consideration of what might be accomplished, if we chose to devote to the help what we now devote to the mockery of the Swiss. But I would that the enlight-

ened population of Paris and London were content with doing nothing;—that they were satisfied with expenditure upon their idle pleasures, in their idle way; and would leave the Swiss to their own mountain gloom of unadvancing independence. I believe that every franc now spent by travellers among the Alps tends more or less to the undermining of whatever special greatness there is in the Swiss character; and the persons I met in Switzerland, whose position and modes of life rendered them best able to give me true information respecting the present state of their country, among many causes of national deterioration, spoke with chief fear of the influx of English wealth, gradually connecting all industry with the wants and ways of strangers, and inviting all idleness to depend upon their casual help; thus gradually resolving the ancient consistency and pastoral simplicity of the mountain life into the two irregular trades of innkeeper * and mendicant.

§ 41. I could say much on this subject if I had any hope of doing good by saying anything. But I have none. The influx of foreigners into Switzerland must necessarily be greater every year, and the greater it is, the larger, in the crowd, will be the majority of persons whose objects in travelling will be, first, to get as fast as possible from place to place, and, secondly, at every place where they arrive, to obtain the kind of accommodation and amusement to which they are accustomed in Paris, London, Brighton, or Baden. Railroads are already projected round the head of the Lake of Geneva, and through the town of Fribourg; the head of the

* Not the old hospitable innkeeper, who honored his guests and was honored by them, than whom I do not know a more useful or worthy character; but the modern innkeeper, proprietor of a building in the shape of a factory, making up three hundred beds; who necessarily regards his guests in the light of Numbers 1, 2, 3—300, and is too often felt or apprehended by them only as a presiding influence of extortion.

Lake of Geneva being precisely and accurately the one spot of Europe whose character, and influence on human mind, are special; and unreplaceable if destroyed, no other spot resembling, or being in any wise comparable to it, in its peculiar way: while the town of Fribourg is in like manner the only mediæval mountain town of importance left to us; Innspruck and such others being wholly modern, while Fribourg yet retains much of the aspect it had in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The valley of Chamouni, another spot also unique in its way, is rapidly being turned into a kind of Cremorne Gardens; and I can see, within the perspective of but few years, the town of Lucerne consisting of a row of symmetrical hotels round the foot of the lake, its old bridges destroyed, an iron one built over the Reuss, and an acacia promenade carried along the lake-shore, with a German band playing under a Chinese temple at the end of it, and the enlightened travellers, representatives of European civilization, performing before the Alps, in each afternoon summer sunlight, in their modern manner, the Dance of Death.

§ 42. All this is inevitable; and it has its good as well as its evil side. I can imagine the zealous modernist replying to me that when all this is happily accomplished, my melancholy peasants of the valley of Trient will be turned into thriving shopkeepers, the desolate streets of Sion into glittering thoroughfares, and the marshes of the Valais into prosperous market-gardens. I hope so; and indeed am striving every day to conceive more accurately, and regulate all my efforts by the expectation of, the state of society, not now, I suppose, much more than twenty years in advance of us, when Europe, having satisfactorily effaced all memorials of the past, and reduced itself to the likeness of America, or of any other new country (only with less room for exertion), shall begin to consider what is next to be

done, and to what newness of arts and interests may best be devoted the wealth of its marts, and the strength of its multitudes. Which anticipations and estimates, however, I have never been able, as yet, to carry out with any clearness, being always arrested by the confused notion of a necessity for solitude, disdain of buying and selling, and other elements of that old mediæval and mountain gloom, as in some way connected with the efforts of nearly all men who have either seen far into the destiny, or been much helpful to the souls, of their race. And the grounds of this feeling, whether right or wrong, I hope to analyze more fully in the next volume; only noting, finally, in this, one or two points for the consideration of those among us with whom it may sometimes become a question, whether they will help forward, or not, the turning of a sweet mountain valley into an abyss of factory-stench and toil, or the carrying of a line of traffic through some green place of shepherd solitude.

§ 43. For, if there be any truth in the impression which I have always felt, and just now endeavored to enforce, that the mountains of the earth are its natural cathedrals, or natural altars, overlaid with gold, and bright with broidered work of flowers, and with their clouds resting on them as the smoke of a continual sacrifice, it may surely be a question with some of us, whether the tables of the moneychanger, however fit and commendable they may be as furniture in other places, are precisely the thing which it is the whole duty of man to get well set up in the mountain temple.

§ 44. And perhaps it may help to the better determination of this question, if we endeavor, for a few patient moments, to bear with that weakness of our forefathers in feeling an *awe* for the hills; and, divesting ourselves, as far as may be, of our modern experimental or exploring activity, and habit of regarding

mountains chiefly as places for gymnastic exercise, try to understand the temper, not indeed altogether exemplary, but yet having certain truths and dignities in it, to which we owe the founding of the Benedictine and Carthusian cloisters in the thin Alpine air. And this monkish temper we may, I suppose, best understand by considering the aspect under which mountains are represented in the Monk's book. I found that in my late lectures, at Edinburgh, I gave great offence by supposing, or implying, that scriptural expressions could have any force as bearing upon modern practical questions; so that I do not now, nor shall I any more, allude to such expressions as in any wise necessarily bearing on the worldly business of the practical Protestant, but only as necessary to be glanced at in order to understand the temper of those old monks, who had the awkward habit of understanding the Bible literally; and to get any little good which momentary sympathy with the hearts of a large and earnest class of men may surely bring to us.

§ 45. The monkish view of mountains, then, already alluded to,* was derived wholly from that Latin Vulgate of theirs; and, speaking as a monk, it may perhaps be permitted me to mark the significance of the earliest mention of mountains in the Mosaic books; at least, of those in which some Divine appointment or command is stated respecting them. They are first brought before us as refuges for God's people from the two judgments of water and fire. The ark *rests* upon the "mountains of Ararat;" and man, having passed through that great baptism unto death, kneels upon the earth first where it is nearest heaven, and mingles with the mountain clouds the smoke of his sacrifice of thanksgiving. Again: from the midst of the first judgment by fire, the command of the Deity to His servant is,

* Vol. III. Chap. xiv. § 10.

"Escape to the mountain;" and the morbid fear of the hills, which fills any human mind after long stay in places of luxury and sin, is strangely marked in Lot's complaining reply: "I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me." The third mention, in way of ordinance, is a far more solemn one: "Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off." "The Place," the Mountain of Myrrh, or of bitterness, chosen to fulfil to all the seed of Abraham, far off and near, the inner meaning of promise regarded in that vow: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh mine help."

And the fourth is the delivery of the law on Sinai.

§ 46. It seemed, then, to the monks, that the mountains were appointed by their Maker to be to man, refuges from Judgment, signs of Redemption, and altars of Sanctification and obedience; and they saw them afterwards connected, in the manner the most touching and gracious, with the death, after his task had been accomplished, of the first anointed Priest; the death, in like manner, of the first inspired Lawgiver; and, lastly, with the assumption of his office by the Eternal Priest, Lawgiver, and Saviour.

Observe the connection of these three events. Although the *time* of the deaths of Aaron and Moses was hastened by God's displeasure, we have not, it seems to me, the slightest warrant for concluding that the *manner* of their deaths was intended to be grievous or dishonorable to them. Far from this: it cannot, I think, be doubted that in the denial of the permission to enter the Promised Land, the whole punishment of their sin was included; and that as far as regarded the manner of their deaths, it must have been appointed for them by their Master in all tenderness and love; and with full purpose of ennobling the close of their service upon the earth. It might have seemed to *us* more honorable

that both should have been permitted to die beneath the shadow of the Tabernacle, the congregation of Israel watching by their side; and all whom they loved gathered together to receive the last message from the lips of the meek lawgiver, and the last blessing from the prayer of the anointed priest. But it was not thus they were permitted to die. Try to realize that going forth of Aaron from the midst of the congregation. He who had so often done sacrifice for their sin, going forth now to offer up his own spirit. He who had stood, among them, between the dead and the living, and had seen the eyes of all that great multitude turned to him, that by his intercession their breath might yet be drawn a moment more, going forth now to meet the Angel of Death face to face, and deliver himself into his hand. Try if you cannot walk, in thought, with those two brothers, and the son, as they passed the outmost tents of Israel, and turned, while yet the dew lay round about the camp, towards the slopes of Mount Hor; talking together for the last time, as step by step, they felt the steeper rising of the rocks, and hour after hour, beneath the ascending sun, the horizon grew broader as they climbed, and all the folded hills of Idumea, one by one subdued, showed amidst their hollows in the haze of noon, the windings of that long desert journey, now at last to close. But who shall enter into the thoughts of the High Priest, as his eyes followed those paths of ancient pilgrimage; and, through the silence of the arid and endless hills, stretching even to the dim peak of Sinai, the whole history of those forty years was unfolded before him, and the mystery of his own ministries revealed to him; and that other Holy of Holies, of which the mountain peaks were the altars, and the mountain clouds the veil, the firmament of his Father's dwelling, opened to him still more brighter and infinitely as he drew nearer his death; until at last, on the

shadeless summit,—from him on whom sin was to be laid no more—from him, on whose heart the names of sinful nations were to press their graven fire no longer,—the brother and the son took breastplate and ephod, and left him to his rest.

§ 47. There is indeed a secretness in this calm faith and deep restraint of sorrow, into which it is difficult for us to enter; but the death of Moses himself is more easily to be conceived; and had in it circumstances still more touching, as far as regards the influence of the external scene. For forty years Moses had not been alone. The care and burden of all the people, the weight of their woe, and guilt, and death, had been upon him continually. The multitude had been laid upon him as if he had conceived them; their tears had been his meat, night and day, until he had felt as if God had withdrawn His favor from him, and he had prayed that he might be slain, and not see his wretchedness.* And now, at last, the command came, "Get thee up into this mountain." The weary hands that had been so long stayed up against the enemies of Israel, might lean again upon the shepherd's staff, and fold themselves for the shepherd's prayer—for the shepherd's slumber. Not strange to his feet, though forty years unknown, the roughness of the bare mountain-path, as he climbed from ledge to ledge of Abarim; not strange to his aged eyes the scattered clusters of the mountain herbage, and the broken shadows of the cliffs, indented far across the silence of uninhabited ravines; scenes such as those among which, with none, as now, beside him but God, he had led his flocks so often; and which he had left, how painfully! taking upon him the appointed power, to make of the fenced city a wilderness, and to fill the desert with songs of deliverance. It was not to embitter the last hours of his life that God restored to him, for a day, the beloved

* Numbers, xi. 12, 15.

solitudes he had lost; and breathed the peace of the perpetual hills around him, and cast the world in which he had labored and sinned far beneath his feet, in that mist of dying blue;—all sin, all wandering, soon to be forgotten forever; the Dead Sea—a type of God's anger understood by him, of all men, most clearly, who had seen the earth open her mouth, and the sea his depth, to overwhelm the companies of those who contended with his Master—lay waveless beneath him; and beyond it, the fair hills of Judah, and the soft plains and banks of Jordan, purple in the evening light as with the blood of redemption, and fading in their distant fulness into mysteries of promise and of love. There, with his unabated strength, his undimmed glance, lying down upon the utmost rocks, with angels waiting near to contend for the spoils of his spirit, he put off his earthly armor. We do deep reverence to his companion prophet, for whom the chariot of fire came down from heaven; but was his death less noble, whom his Lord Himself buried in the vales of Moab, keeping, in the secrets of the eternal counsels, the knowledge of a sepulchre, from which he was to be called, in the fulness of time, to talk with that Lord, upon Hermon, of the death that He should accomplish at Jerusalem?

And lastly, let us turn our thoughts for a few moments to the cause of the resurrection of these two prophets. We are all of us too much in the habit of passing it by, as a thing mystical and inconceivable, taking place in the life of Christ for some purpose not by us to be understood, or, at the best, merely as a manifestation of His divinity by brightness of heavenly light, and the ministering of the spirits of the dead, intended to strengthen the faith of His three chosen apostles. And in this, as in many other events recorded by the Evangelists, we lose half the meaning and evade the practical power upon ourselves, by never accepting in its fulness

the idea that our Lord was "perfect man" "tempted in all things like as we are." Our preachers are continually trying, in all manner of subtle ways, to explain the union of the Divinity with the Manhood, an explanation which certainly involves first their being able to describe the nature of Deity itself, or, in plain words, to comprehend God. They never can explain, in any one particular, the union of the natures; they only succeed in weakening the faith of their hearers as to the entireness of either. The thing they have to do is precisely the contrary of this—to insist upon the *entireness* of both. We never think of Christ enough as God, never enough as Man; the instinctive habit of our minds being always to miss of the Divinity, and the reasoning and enforced habit to miss of the Humanity. We are afraid to harbor in our own hearts, or to utter in the hearing of others, any thought of our Lord, as hungering, tired, sorrowful, having a human soul, a human will, and affected by events of human life as a finite creature is; and yet one half of the efficiency of His atonement, and the whole of the efficiency of His example, depend on His having been this to the full.

§ 48. Consider, therefore, the Transfiguration as it relates to the human feelings of our Lord. It was the first definite preparation for His death. He had foretold it to His disciples six days before; then takes with Him the three chosen ones into "an high mountain apart." From an exceeding high mountain, at the first taking on Him the ministry of life, He had beheld, and rejected the kingdoms of the earth, and their glory: now, on a high mountain, He takes upon Him the ministry of death. Peter and they that were with him, as in Gethsemane, were heavy with sleep. Christ's work had to be done alone.

The tradition is, that the Mount of Transfiguration was the summit of Tabor; but Tabor is neither a high

mountain, nor was it in any sense a mountain "*apart;*" being in those years both inhabited and fortified. All the immediately preceding ministries of Christ had been at Cesarea Philippi. There is no mention of travel southward in the six days that intervened between the warning given to His disciples, and the going up into the hill. What other hill could it be than the southward slope of that goodly mountain, Hermon, which is indeed the centre of all the Promised Land, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt; the mount of fruitfulness, from which the springs of Jordan descended to the valleys of Israel. Along its mighty forest avenues, until the grass grew fair with the mountain lilies, His feet dashed in the dew of Hermon, He must have gone to pray his first recorded prayer about death; and from the steep of it, before He knelt, could see to the south all the dwelling-place of the people that had sat in darkness, and seen the great light, the land of Zabulon and of Naphtali, Galilee of the nations;—could see, even with His human sight, the gleam of that lake by Capernaum and Chorazin, and many a place loved by Him, and vainly ministered to, whose house was now left unto them desolate; and, chief of all, far in the utmost blue, the hills above Nazareth, sloping down to His old home: hills on which yet the stones lay loose, that had been taken up to cast at Him, when He left them forever.

§ 49. "And as he prayed, two men stood by him." Among the many ways in which we miss the help and hold of Scripture, none is more subtle than our habit of supposing that, even as man, Christ was free from the Fear of Death. How could He then have been tempted as we are? since among all the trials of the earth, none spring from the dust more terrible than that Fear. It had to be borne by Him, indeed, in a unity, which we can never comprehend, with the foreknowledge of vic-

tory,—as His sorrow for Lazarus, with the consciousness of the power to restore him; but it *had* to be borne, and that in its full earthly terror; and the presence of it is surely marked for us enough by the rising of those two at His side. When, in the desert, He was girding Himself for the work of life, angels of life came and ministered unto Him; now, in the fair world, when He is girding Himself for the work of death, the ministrants come to Him from the grave.

But from the grave conquered. One, from that tomb under Abarim, which His own hand had sealed so long ago; the other from the rest into which he had entered, without seeing corruption. There stood by Him Moses and Elias, and spake of His decease.

Then, when the prayer is ended, the task accepted, first, since the star paused over Him at Bethlehem, the full glory falls upon Him from heaven, and the testimony is borne to his everlasting Sonship and power. "Hear ye him."

If, in their remembrance of these things, and in their endeavor to follow in the footsteps of their Master, religious men of by-gone days, closing themselves in the hill solitudes, forgot sometimes, and sometimes feared, the duties they owed to the active world, we may perhaps pardon them more easily than we ought to pardon ourselves, if we neither seek any influence for good nor submit to it unsought, in scenes to which thus all the men whose writings we receive as inspired, together with their Lord, retired whenever they had any task or trial laid upon them needing more than their usual strength of spirit. Nor, perhaps, should we have unprofitably entered into the mind of the earlier ages, if among our other thoughts, as we watch the chains of the snowy mountains rise on the horizon, we should sometimes admit the memory of the hour in which their Creator, among their solitudes, entered on His travail

for the salvation of our race; and indulge the dream, that as the flaming and trembling mountains of the earth seem to be the monuments of the manifesting of his terror on Sinai,—these pure and white hills, near to the heaven, and sources of all good to the earth, are the appointed memorials of that Light of His Mercy, that fell, snow-like, on the Mount of Transfiguration.

APPENDIX.

I. Modern Grotesque.

The reader may perhaps be somewhat confused by the different tone with which, in various passages of these volumes, I have spoken of the dignity of Expression. He must remember that there are three distinct schools of expression, and that it is impossible, on every occasion when the term is used, to repeat the definition of the three, and distinguish the school spoken of.

There is, first, the Great Expressional School, consisting of the sincerely thoughtful and affectionate painters of early times, masters of their art, as far as it was known in their days. Orcagna, John Bellini, Perugino, and Angelico, are its leading masters. All the men who compose it are, without exception, *colorists*. The modern Pre-Raphaelites belong to it.

Secondly, the Pseudo-Expressional School, wholly of modern development, consisting of men who have never mastered their art, and are probably incapable of mastering it, but who hope to substitute sentiment for good painting. It is eminently characterized by its contempt of color, and may be most definitely distinguished as the School of Clay.

Thirdly, the Grotesque Expressional School, consisting of men who, having peculiar powers of observation for the stronger signs of character in anything, and sincerely delighting in them, lose sight of the associated

refinements or beauties. This school is apt, more or less, to catch at faults or strangenesses; and, associating its powers of observation with wit or malice, produces the wild, gay, or satirical grotesque in early sculpture, and in modern times, our rich and various popular caricature.

I took no note of this branch of art in the chapter on the Grotesque Ideal; partly because I did not wish to disturb the reader's mind in our examination of the great imaginative grotesque, and also because I did not feel able to give a distinct account of this branch, having never thoroughly considered the powers of eye and hand involved in its finer examples. But assuredly men of strong intellect and fine sense are found among the caricaturists, and it is to them that I allude in saying that the most subtle expression is often attained by "slight studies;" while it is of the pseudo-expressionalist, or "high art" school that I am speaking, when I say that expression may "sometimes be elaborated by the toil of the dull;" in neither case meaning to depreciate the work, wholly different in every way, of the great expressional schools.

I regret that I have not been able, as yet, to examine with care the powers of mind involved in modern caricature. They are, however, always partial and imperfect; for the very habit of looking for the leading lines by the smallest possible number of which the expression may be attained, warps the power of *general* attention, and blunts the perception of the delicacies of the entire form and color. Not that caricature, or exaggeration of points of character, may not be occasionally indulged in by the greatest men—as constantly by Leonardo; but then it will be found that the caricature consists, not in imperfect or violent *drawing*, but in delicate and perfect drawing of strange and exaggerated forms quaintly combined: and even thus, I believe, the

habit of looking for such conditions will be found injurious; I strongly suspect its operation on Leonardo to have been the increase of his non-natural tendencies in his higher works. A certain acknowledgment of the ludicrous element is admitted in corners of the pictures of Veronese—in dwarfs or monkeys; but it is *never* caricatured or exaggerated. Tintoret and Titian hardly admit the element at all. They admit the noble grotesque to the full, in all its quaintness, brilliancy, and awe; but never any form of it depending on exaggeration, partiality, or fallacy.*

I believe, therefore, whatever wit, delicate appreciation of ordinary character, or other intellectual power may belong to the modern masters of caricature, their method of study forever incapacitates them from passing beyond a certain point, and either reaching any of the perfect forms of art themselves, or understanding them in others. Generally speaking, their power is limited to the use of the pen or pencil — they cannot touch color without discomfiture; and even those whose work is of higher aim, and wrought habitually in color, are prevented by their pursuit of *piquant* expression from understanding noble expression. Leslie furnishes several curious examples of this defect of perception in his late work on Art;—talking, for instance, of the "insipid faces of Francia."

On the other hand, all the real masters of caricature deserve honor in this respect, that their gift is peculiarly their own—innate and incommunicable. No teaching, no hard study, will ever enable other people to equal, in their several ways, the works of Leech or Cruikshank; whereas, the power of pure drawing is communicable, within certain limits, to every one who has good sight and industry. I do not, indeed, know how far, by devoting the attention to points of character, caricaturist skill may be laboriously attained; but certainly the power

* Compare Stones of Venice, vol. iii. chap. iii. § 74.

is, in the masters of the school, innate from their childhood.

Farther. It is evident that many subjects of thought may be dealt with by this kind of art which are inapproachable by any other, and that its influence over the popular mind must always be great; hence it may often happen that men of strong purpose may rather express themselves in this way (and continue to make such expression a matter of earnest study), than turn to any less influential, though more dignified, or even more intrinsically meritorious, branch of art. And when the powers of quaint fancy are associated (as is frequently the case) with stern understanding of the nature of evil, and tender human sympathy, there results a bitter, or pathetic spirit of grotesque, to which mankind at the present day owe more thorough moral teaching than to any branch of art whatsoever.

In poetry, the temper is seen, in perfect manifestation, in the works of Thomas Hood; in art, it is found both in various works of the Germans,—their finest, and their least thought of; and more or less in the works of George Cruikshank,* and in many of the illustrations of our popular journals. On the whole, the most impressive example of it, in poetry and in art, which I remember, are the "Song of the Shirt," and the woodcuts of Alfred Rethel, before spoken of. A correspondent, though coarser work appeared some little time back in *Punch*, namely, the "General Février turned Traitor."

The reception of the woodcut last named was in several respects a curious test of modern feeling. For the sake of the general reader, it may be well to state the occasion and character of it. It will be remembered by all that early in the winter of 1854–5, so fatal by its inclemency, and by our own improvidence, to our army in

* Taken all in all, the works of Cruikshank have the most sterling value of any belonging to this class, produced in England.

the Crimea, the late Emperor of Russia said, or was reported to have said, that "his best commanders, General January and General February, were not yet come." The word, if ever spoken, was at once base, cruel, and blasphemous; base, in precisely reversing the temper of all true soldiers, so nobly instanced by the son of Saladin, when he sent, at the very instant of the discomfiture of his own army, two horses to Cœur de Lion, whose horse had been killed under him in the mêlée; cruel, inasmuch as he ought not to have exulted in the thought of the death, by slow suffering, of brave men; blasphemous, inasmuch as it contained an appeal to Heaven of which he knew the hypocrisy. He himself died in February; and the woodcut of which I speak represented a skeleton in soldier's armor, entering his chamber, the driven sleet white on its cloak and crest; laying its hand on his heart as he lay dead.

There were some points to be regretted in the execution of the design, but the thought was a grand one; the memory of the word spoken, and of its answer, could hardly in any more impressive way have been recorded for the people; and I believe that to all persons accustomed to the earnest forms of art, it contained a profound and touching lesson. The notable thing was, however, that it offended all persons *not* in earnest, and was loudly cried out against by the polite formalism of society. This fate is, I believe, the most inevitable one of thoroughly genuine work, in these days, whether poetry or painting: but what added to the singularity in this case was that *coarse* heartlessness was even more offended than polite heartlessness. Thus, *Blackwood's Magazine* —which from the time that, with grace, judgment, and tenderness peculiarly its own, it bid the dying Keats "back to his gallipots,"* to that in which it partly

* "The notice in Blackwood is still more scurrilous; the circumstance of Keats having been brought up a surgeon is the staple of the

arrested the last efforts, and shortened the life of Turner, had with an infallible instinct for the wrong, given what pain it could, and withered what strength it could, in every great mind that was in anywise within its reach; and had made itself, to the utmost of its power, frost and disease of the heart to the most noble spirits of England,—took upon itself to be generously offended at this triumphing over the death of England's enemy, because, "by proving that he is obliged to undergo the common lot of all, his brotherhood is at once reasserted." * He was not, then, a brother while he was alive? or is our brother's blood in general not to be acknowledged by us till it rushes up against us from the ground? I know that this is a common creed, whether a peculiarly wise or Christian one may be doubted. It may not, indeed, be well to triumph over the dead, but perhaps it is less well

jokes of the piece. He is told 'it is a better and wiser thing to be a starved apothecary than a starved poet.—'" *Milnes' Life of Keats*, vol. i. p. 200, and compare pp. 193, 194. It may perhaps be said that I attach too much importance to the evil of base criticism; but those who think so have never rightly understood its scope, nor the reach of that stern saying of Johnson's (Idler, No. 3, April 29, 1758): "Little does he (who assumes the character of a critic) think how many harmless men he involves in his own guilt, by teaching them to be noxious without malignity, and to repeat objections which they do not understand." And truly, not in this kind only, but in all things whatsoever, there is not, to my mind, a more woful or wonderful matter of thought than the power of a fool. In the world's affairs there is no design so great or good but it will take twenty wise men to help it forward a few inches, and a single fool can stop it; there is no evil so great or so terrible but that, after a multitude of counsellors have taken means to avert it, a single fool will bring it down. Pestilence, famine, and the sword, are given into the fool's hand as the arrows into the hand of the giant: and if he were fairly set forth in the right motley, the web of it should be sackcloth and sable; the bells on his cap, passing balls; his badge, a bear robbed of her whelps; and his bauble, a sexton's spade.

* By the way, this doubt of the possibility of an emperor's death till he *proves* it, is a curious fact in the history of Scottish metaphysics in the nineteenth century.

that the world so often tries to triumph over the living. And as for exultation over a fallen foe (though there was *none* in the mind of the man who drew that monarch dead), it may be remembered that there have been worthy persons, before now, guilty of this great wickedness,—nay, who have even fitted the words of their exultation to timbrels, and gone forth to sing them in dances. There have even been those—women, too,—who could make a mock at the agony of a mother weeping over her lost son, when that son had been the enemy of their country; and their mock has been preserved, as worthy to be read by human eyes. "The mother of Sisera looked out at a window. 'Hath he not sped?'" I do not say this was right, still less that it was wrong; but only that it would be well for us if we could quit our habit of thinking that what we say of the dead is of more weight than what we say of the living. The dead either know nothing, or know enough to despise both us and our insults, or adulation.

"Well, but," it is answered, "there will always be this weakness in our human nature; we shall forever, in spite of reason, take pleasure in doing funereal honor to the corpse, and writing sacredness to memory upon marble." Then, if you are to do this,—if you are to put off your kindness until death,—why not, in God's name, put off also your enmity? and if you choose to write your lingering affections upon stones, wreak also your delayed anger upon clay. This would be just, and, in the last case, little as you think it, generous. The true baseness is in the bitter reverse—the strange iniquity of our folly. Is a man to be praised, honored, pleaded for? It might do harm to praise or plead for him while he lived. Wait till he is dead. Is he to be maligned, dishonored, and discomforted? See that you do it while he is alive. It would be too ungenerous to slander him when he could feel malice no more; too contemptible to try to hurt him

when he was past anguish. Make yourselves busy, ye unjust, ye lying, ye hungry for pain! Death is near. This is your hour, and the power of darkness. Wait, ye just, ye merciful, ye faithful in love! Wait but for a little while, for this is not your rest.

"Well, but," it is still answered, "is it not, indeed, ungenerous to speak ill of the dead, since they cannot defend themselves?"

Why should they? If you speak ill of them falsely, it concerns you, not them. Those lies of thine will "hurt a man as thou art," assuredly they will hurt thyself; but that clay, or the delivered soul of it, in no wise. Ajacean shield, seven-folded, never stayed lance-thrust as that turf will, with dasies pied. What you say of those quiet ones is wholly and utterly the world's affair and yours. The lie will, indeed, cost its proper price and work its appointed work; you may ruin living myriads by it,—you may stop the progress of centuries by it,—you may have to pay your own soul for it,—but as for ruffling one corner of the folded shroud by it, think it not. The dead have none to defend them! Nay, they have two defenders, strong enough for the need—God, and the worm.

II. Rock Cleavage.

I am well aware how insufficient, and, in some measure, how disputable, the account given in the preceding chapters of the cleavages of the slaty crystallines must appear to geologists. But I had several reasons, good or bad as they may be, for treating the subject in such a manner. The first was, that considering the science of the artist as eminently the science of *aspects* (see Vol. III. Chap. xvii. § 43), I kept myself in all my investigations of natural objects as much as possible in the state of an uninformed spectator of the outside of things, receiving simply what impressions the external phenomena first in-

duce. For the natural tendency of accurate science is to make the possessor of it look for, and eminently see, the things connected with his special pieces of knowledge; and as all accurate science must be sternly limited, his sight of nature gets limited accordingly. I observed that all our young figure-painters were rendered, to all intents and purposes, *blind* by their knowledge of anatomy. They saw only certain muscles and bones, of which they had learned the positions by rote, but could not, on account of the very prominence in their minds of these bits of fragmentary knowledge, see the real movement, color, rounding, or any other subtle quality of the human form. And I was quite sure that if I examined the mountain anatomy scientifically, I should go wrong, in like manner, touching the external aspects. Therefore in beginning the inquiries of which the results are given in the preceding pages, I closed all geological books, and set myself, as far as I could, to see the Alps in a simple, thoughtless, and untheorizing manner; but to *see* them, if it might be, thoroughly. If I am wrong in any of the statements made after this kind of examination, the very fact of this error is an interesting one, as showing the kind of deception which the external aspects of hills are calculated to induce in an unprejudiced observer; but, whether wrong or right, I believe the results I have given are those which naturally would strike an artist, and *ought* to strike him, just as the apparently domical form of the sky, and radiation of the sun's light, ought to be marked by him as pictorial phenomena, though the sky is not domical, and though the radiation of sunbeams is a perspective deception. There are, however, one or two points on which my opinions might seem more adverse to the usual positions of geologists than they really are, owing to my having left out many *qualifying* statements for fear of confusing the reader. These I must here briefly touch upon. And, first, I

know that I shall be questioned for not having sufficiently dwelt upon slaty cleavages running transversely across series of beds, and for generally speaking as if the slaty crystalline rocks were merely dried beds of micaceous sand, in which the flakes of mica naturally lay parallel with the beds, or only at such an angle to them as is constantly assumed by particles of drift. Now the reason of this is simply that my own mountain experience has led me *always* among rocks which induced such an impression; that, in general, artists seeking for the noblest hill scenery, will also get among such rocks, and that therefore I judged it best to explain their structure completely, merely alluding (in Chap. x. § 7) to the curious results of cross cleavage among the softer slates, and leaving the reader to pursue the inquiry, if he cared to do so; although, in reality, it matters very little to the artist whether the slaty cleavage be across the beds or not, for to him the cleavage itself is always the important matter, and the stratification, if contrary to it, is usually so obscure as to be naturally, and therefore properly, lost sight of. And touching the disputed question whether the micaceous arrangements of metamorphic rocks are the results of subsequent crystallization, or of aqueous deposition, I had no special cause to speak: the whole subject appeared to me only more mysterious the more I examined it; but my own impressions were always strongly for the aqueous deposition; nor in such cases as that of the beds of the Matterhorn (drawn in Plate 39), respecting which, somewhat exceptionally, I have allowed myself to theorize a little, does the matter appear to me disputable.

And I was confirmed in this feeling by De Saussure; the only writer whose help I did not refuse in the course of these inquiries. *His* I received for this reason,—all other geological writers whose works I had examined were engaged in the maintenance of some theory or oth-

er, and always gathering materials to support it. But I found Saussure had gone to the Alps as I desired to go myself, only to *look* at them, and describe them as they were, loving them heartily—loving them, the positive Alps, more than himself, or than science, or than any theories of science; and I found his descriptions, therefore, clear, and trustworthy; and that when I had not visited any place myself, Saussure's report upon it might always be received without question.

Not but that Saussure himself has a pet theory, like other human beings; only it is quite subordinate to his love of the Alps. He is a steady advocate of the aqueous crystallization of rocks, and never loses a fair opportunity of a blow at the Huttonians; but his opportunities are always *fair*, his description of what he sees is wholly impartial; it is only when he gets home and arranges his papers that he puts in the little aqueously inclined paragraphs, and never a paragraph without just cause. He may, perhaps, overlook the evidence on the opposite side; but in the Alps the igneous alteration of the rocks, and the modes of their upheaval, seem to me subjects of intense difficulty and mystery, and as such Saussure always treats them; the evidence for the original *deposition* by water of the slaty crystallines appears to him, as it does to me, often perfectly distinct.

Now, Saussure's universal principle was exactly the one on which I have founded my account of the slaty crystallines:—"Fidèle à mon principle, de ne regarder comme des couches, dans les montagnes schisteuses, que les divisions parallèles aux feuillets des schistes dont elles sont composées."—*Voyages*, § 1747. I know that this is an arbitrary, and in some cases an assuredly false, principle; but the assumption of it by De Saussure proves all that I want to prove,—namely, that the beds of the slaty crystallines are in the Alps in so large a plurality of instances correspondent in direction to their folia, as

to induce even a cautious reasoner to assume such correspondence to be universal.

The next point, however, on which I shall be opposed, is one on which I speak with far less confidence, for in this Saussure himself is against me,—namely, the parallelism of the beds sloping under the Mont Blanc. Saussure states twice, §§ 656, 677, that they are arranged in the form of a fan. I can only repeat that every measurement and every drawing I made in Chamouni led me to the conclusions stated in the text, and so I leave the subject to better investigators; this one fact being indisputable, and the only one on which for my purpose it is necessary to insist, that, whether in Chamouni the beds be radiant or not, to an artist's eye they are usually parallel; and throughout the Alps no phenomenon is more constant than the rounding of surfaces across the extremities of beds sloping outwards, as seen in my Plates 37, 40, and 49, and this especially in the most majestic mountain masses. Compare De Saussure of the Grimsel, § 1712: "Toujours il est bien remarquable que ces feuillets, verticaux au sommet, s'inclinent ensuite, comme à Chamouni, contre le dehors de la montagne:" and again of the granite at Guttannen, § 1679: "Ces couches ne sont pas tout-a-fait verticales; elles s'appuyent un peu contre le Nord-Est, ou, comme à Chamouni, contre le dehors de la montagne." Again, of the "quartz micacé" of Zumloch, § 1723: "Ces rochers sont en couches à peu près verticales, dont les plans courent du Nord-Est au Sud-Ouest, en s'appuyant, *suivant l'usage*, contre l'extérieur de la montagne, ou contre la vallée." Again, on the Pass of the Gries, § 1738: "Le rocher présente des couches d'un schiste micacé rayé comme une étoffe; comme de l'autre côté ils surplombent vers le dehors de la montagne." Without referring to other passages I think Saussure's simple words, "suivant l'usage," are enough to justify my state-

ment in Chap. XIV. § 3; only the reader must of course always remember that every conceivable position of beds takes place in the Alps, and all I mean to assert generally is, that where the masses are most enormous and impressive, and formed of slaty crystalline rock there the run of the beds up, as it were, from within the mountain to its surface, will, in all probability, become a notable feature in the scene as regarded by an artist. One somewhat unusual form assumed by horizontal beds of slaty crystallines, or of granite, is described by Saussure with unusual admiration; and the passage is worth extracting, as bearing on the terraced ideal of rocks in the middle ages. The scene is in the Val Formazza.

"Indépendamment de l'intérêt que ces couches présentent au géologiste sous un nombre de rapports qu'il serait trop long et peut-être inutile de détailler, elles présentent même pour le peintre, un superbe tableau. Je n'ai jamais vu de plus beaux rochers et distribués en plus grandes masses; ici, blancs; là, noircis par les lichens; là, peints de ces belles couleurs variées, que nous admirions au Grimsel, et entremêlés d'arbres, dont les uns couronnent le faîte de la montagne, et d'autres sont inégalement jetés sur les corniches qui en séparent les couches. Vers le bas de la montagne l'œil se repose sur de beaux vergers, dans des prairies dont le terrain est inégal et varié, et sur de magnifiques châtaigniers, dont les branches étendues ombragent les rochers contre lesquels ils croissent. En général, ces granits en couches horizontales rendent ce pays charmant; car, quoiqu'il y ait, comme je l'ai dit, des couches qui forment des saillies, cependant elles sont pour l'ordinaire arrangées en gradins, ou en grandes assises posées en reculement les unes derrière les autres, et les bords de ces gradins sont couverts de la plus belle verdure, et d'arbres distribués de la manière la plus pitto-

resque. On voit même des montagnes très-élevées, qui ont la forme de pain de sucre, et qui sont entourées et couronnées jusqu'à leur sommet, de guirlandes d'arbres assis sur les intervalles des couches, et qui forment l'effet du monde le plus singulier."—*Voyages*, § 1758.

Another statement, which I made generally, referring, for those qualifications which it is so difficult to give without confusing the reader, to this appendix, was that of the usually greater hardness of the tops of mountains as compared with their flanks. My own experience among the Alps has furnished me with few exceptions to this law; but there is a very interesting one, according to Saussure, in the range of the Furca del Bosco. (Voyages, § 1779.)

Lastly, at page 237 of this volume, I have alluded to the various cleavages of the aiguilles, out of which one only has been explained and illustrated. I had not intended to treat the subject so partially; and had actually prepared a long chapter, explaining the relations of five different and important systems of cleavage in the Chamouni aiguilles. When it was written, however, I found it looked so repulsive to readers in general, and proved so little that was of interest even to readers in particular, that I cancelled it, leaving only the account of what I might, perhaps, not unjustifiably (from the first representation of it in the Liber Studiorum) call Turner's cleavage. The following passage, which was the introduction to the chapter, may serve to show that I have not ignored the others, though I found, after long examination, that Turner's was the principal one:—

"One of the principal distinctions between these crystalline masses and stratified rocks, with respect to their outwardly apparent structure, is the subtle complexity and number of *ranks* in their crystalline cleavages. The stratified masses have always a simple intel-

ligible organization; their beds lie in one direction, and certain fissures and fractures of those beds lie in other clearly ascertainable directions; seldom more than two or three *distinct* directions of these fractures being admitted. But if the traveller will set himself deliberately to watch the shadows on the aiguilles of Chamouni as the sun moves round them, he will find that nearly every quarter of an hour a new *set* of cleavages becomes visible, not confused and orderless, but a series of lines inclining in some one definite direction, and that so positively, that if he had only seen the aiguille at that moment, he would assuredly have supposed its internal structure to be altogether regulated by the lines of bed or cleavage then in sight. Let him, however, wait for another quarter of an hour, and he will see those lines fade entirely away as the sun rounds them; and another set, perhaps quite adverse to them and assuredly lying in another direction, will as gradually become visible, to die away in their turn, and be succeeded by a third scheme of structure.

"These 'dissolving views' of the geology of the aiguilles have often thrown me into despair of ever being able to give any account of their formation; but just in proportion as I became aware of the infinite complexity of their framework, the one great fact rose into more prominent and wonderful relief,—that through this inextricable complexity there was always manifested *some* authoritative principle. It mattered not at what hour of the day the aiguilles were examined, at that hour they had a system of structure belonging to the moment. No confusion nor anarchy ever appeared amidst their strength, but an ineffable order, only the more perfect because incomprehensible. They differed from lower mountains, not merely in being more compact, but in being more disciplined.

"For, observe, the lines which cause these far-away

effects of shadow, are not, as often in less noble rocks, caused by real cracks through the body of the mountain; for, were this so, it would follow, from what has just been stated, that these aiguilles were cracked through and through in every direction, and therefore actually weaker, instead of stronger, than other rocks. But the appearance of fracture is entirely external, and the sympathy or parallelism of the lines indicates, not an actual splitting through the rock, but a mere disposition in the rock to split harmoniously when it is compelled to do so. Thus, in the shell-like fractures on the flank of the Aiguille Blaitière, the rock is not actually divided, as it appears to be, into successive hollow plates. Go up close to the inner angle between one bed of rock and the next, and the whole mass will be found as firmly united as a piece of glass. There is absolutely no crack between the beds,—no, not so much as would allow the blade of a penknife to enter for a quarter of an inch;* but such a subtle disposition to symmetry of fracture in the heart of the solid rock, that the next thunderbolt

* The following extract from my diary refers to the only instance in which I remember any appearance of a spring, or welling of water through inner fissures, in the aiguilles.

"20th August. Ascended the moraine till I reached the base of Blaitière; the upper part of the moraine excessively loose and edgy; covered with fresh snow; the rocks were wreathed in mist, and a light sleet, composed of small grains of kneaded snow, kept beating in my face; it was bitter cold too, though the thermometer was at 43°, but the wind was like that of an English December thaw. I got to the base of the aiguille, however, one of the most grand and sweeping bits of granite I have ever seen; a small gurgling streamlet, escaping from a fissure not wide enough to let in my hand, made a strange hollow ringing in the compact rock, and came welling out over its ledges with the sound, and successive wave, of water out of a narrow-necked bottle, covering the rock with ice (which must have been frozen there last night) two inches thick. I levelled the Breven top, and found it a little beneath me; the Charmoz glacier on the left sank from the moraine in broken fragments of nevè and swept back under the dark walls of the Charmoz, lost in cloud."

which strikes on that edge of it will rend away a shell-shaped fragment or series of fragments; and will either break it so as to continue the line of one of the existing sides, or in some other line parallel to that. And yet this resolvedness to break into shell-shaped fragments running north and south is only characteristic of the rock at this spot, and at certain other spots where similar circumstances have brought out this peculiar humor. Forty yards farther on it will be equally determined to break in another direction, and nothing will persuade it to the contrary. Forty yards farther it will change its mind again, and face its beds round to another quarter of the compass; and yet all these alternating caprices are each parts of one mighty continuous caprice, which is only masked for a time, as threads of one color are in a patterned stuff by threads of another; and thus from a distance, precisely the same cleavage is seen repeated again and again in different places, forming a systematic structure; while other groups of cleavages will become visible in their turn, either as we change our place of observation, or as the sunlight changes the direction of its fall."

One part of these rocks, I think, no geologist interested in this subject should pass without examination; viz., the little spur of Blaitière drawn in Plate 29, Fig. 3. It is seen, as there shown, from the moraine of the Charmoz glacier, its summit bearing S. 40° W.; and its cleavage bed leaning to the left or S. E., against the aiguille Blaitière. If, however, we go down to the extremity of the rocks themselves, on the right, we shall find that all those thick beams of rock are actually *sawn into vertical timbers* by other cleavage, sometimes so fine as to look almost slaty, directed straight S. E., against the aiguille, as if, continued, it would saw it through and through; finally, cross the spur and go down to the glacier below, between it and the Aiguille du Plan, and the bottom of

the spur will be found presenting the most splendid mossy surfaces, through which the true gneissitic cleavage is faintly traceable, dipping *at right angles* to the beds in Fig. 3, or under the Aiguille Blaitière, thus concurring with the beds of La Côte.

I forgot to note that the view of this Aiguille Blaitière, given in Plate 39, was taken from the station marked *q* in the reference figure, p. 211; and the sketch of the Aiguille du Plan at p. 238, from the station marked *r* in the same figure, a highly interesting point of observation in many respects; while the course of transition from the protogine into gneiss presents more remarkable phenomena on the descents from that point *r* to the Tabia, T, than at any other easily accessible spot.

Various interesting descriptions of granite cleavage will be found in De Saussure, chiefly in his accounts of the Grimsel and St. Gothard. The following summary of his observations on their positions of beds (1774), may serve to show the reader how long I should have detained him if I had endeavored to give a description of all the attendant phenomena:—"Il est aussi bien curieux de voir ces gneiss, et ces granits veinés, en couches verticales à Guttannen; mélangées d'horizontales et de verticales au Lauteraar; toutes verticales au Grimsel et au Griés; toutes horizontales dans le Val Formazza, et enfin pour la troisième fois verticales à la sortie des Alpes à l'entrée du Lac Majeur."

III. Logical Education.

In the Preface to the third volume I alluded to the conviction, daily gaining ground upon me, of the need of a more accurately logical education of our youth. Truly among the most pitiable and practically hurtful weaknesses of the modern English mind, its usual in-

ability to grasp the connection between any two ideas which have elements of opposition in them, as well as of connection, is perhaps the chief. It is shown with singular fatality in the vague efforts made by our divines to meet the objections raised by free-thinkers, bearing on the nature and origin of evil; but there is hardly a sentence written on any matter requiring careful analysis, by writers who have not yet begun to perceive the influence of their own vanity (and there are too many such among divines), which will not involve some half-lamentable, half-ludicrous, logical flaw,—such flaws being the invariable consequence of a man's straining to say anything in a learned instead of an intelligible manner.

Take a sentence, for example, from J. A. James's "Anxious Inquirer:"—"It is a great principle that *subjective religion, or in other words*, religion *in us*, is produced and sustained by fixing the mind on *objective religion, or* the facts and doctrines of the Word of God."

Cut entirely out the words I have put in italics, and the sentence has a meaning (though not by any means an important one). But by its verbosities it is extended into pure nonsense; for "facts" are neither "objective" nor "subjective"* religion; they are not religion at all. The belief of them, attended with certain feelings, is religion; and it must always be religion "in us," for in whom else should it be (unless in angels; which would not make it less "subjective"). It is just as rational to call doctrines "objective religion," as to call entreaties "objective compassion;" and the only real fact of any notability deducible from the sentence is, that the writer desired earnestly to say something profound, and had nothing profound to say.

*If these two unlucky words get much more hold in the language, we shall soon have our philosophers refusing to call their dinner "dinner," but speaking of it always as their "objective appetite."

To this same defect of intellect must, in charity, be attributed many of the wretched cases of special pleading which we continually hear from the pulpit. In the year 1853, I heard, in Edinburgh, a sermon from a leading and excellent Presbyterian clergyman, on a subject generally grateful to Protestant audiences, namely, the impropriety and weakness of fasting. The preacher entirely denied that there was any authority for fasting in the New Testament; declared that there were many feasts appointed, but no fasts; insisted with great energy on the words "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats," &c., as descriptive of Romanism, and *never once*, throughout a long sermon, ventured so much as a single syllable that might recall to his audience's recollection the existence of such texts as Matthew iv. 2 and vi. 16, or Mark ix. 29. I have heard many sermons from Roman Catholic priests, but I never yet heard, in the strongest holds of Romanism, any so monstrous an instance of special pleading; in fact, it never could have occurred in a sermon by any respectable Roman Catholic divine; for the Romanists are trained to argument from their youth, and are always to some extent plausible.

It is of course impossible to determine, in such cases, how far the preacher, having conscientiously made up his mind on the subject by foregoing thought, and honestly desiring to impress his conclusion on his congregation, may think his object will be best, and even justifiably attained, by insisting on all that is in favor of his position, and trusting to the weak heads of his hearers not to find out the arguments for the contrary; fearing that if he stated, in any proportionate measure, the considerations on the other side, he might not be able, in the time allotted to him, to bring out his conclusion fairly. This, though I hold it an entirely false view, is nevertheless a comprehensible and pardonable

one, especially in a man familiar with the reasoning capacities of the public; though those capacities themselves owe half their shortcomings to being so unworthily treated. But, on the whole, and looking broadly at the way the speakers and teachers of the nation set about their business, there is an almost fathomless failure in the results, owing to the general admission of special pleading as an *art to be taught* to youth. The main thing which we ought to teach our youth is to *see* something,—all that the eyes which God has given them are capable of seeing. The sum of what we *do* teach them is to *say* something. As far as I have experience of instruction, no man ever dreams of teaching a boy to get to the root of a matter; to think it out; to get quit of passion and desire in the process of thinking; or to fear no face of man in plainly asserting the ascertained result. But to *say* anything in a glib and graceful manner,—to give an epigrammatic turn to nothing,—to quench the dim perceptions of a feeble adversary, and parry cunningly the home thrusts of a strong one,—to invent blanknesses in speech for breathing time, and slipperinesses in speech for hiding time,—to polish malice to the deadliest edge, shape profession to the seemliest shadow, and mask self-interest under the fairest pretext, —all these skills we teach definitely, as the main arts of business and life. There is a strange significance in the admission of Aristotle's Rhetoric at our universities as a class-book. Cheating at cards is a base profession enough, but truly it would be wiser to print a code of gambler's legerdemain, and give *that* for a class-book, than to make the legerdemain of human speech, and the clever shuffling of the black spots in the human heart, the first study of our politic youth. Again, the Ethics of Aristotle, though containing some shrewd talk, interesting for an *old* reader, are yet so absurdly illogical and sophistical, that if a young man has once read them

with any faith, it must take years before he recovers from the induced confusions of thought and false habits of argument. If there were the slightest dexterity or ingenuity in maintaining the false theory, there might be some excuse for retaining the Ethics as a school-book, provided only the tutor were careful to point out, on first opening it, that the Christian virtues,—namely, to love with all the heart, soul, and strength; to fight, not as one that beateth the air; and to do with *might* whatsoever the hand findeth to do,—could not in any wise be defined as "habits of choice in moderation." But the Aristotelian quibbles are so shallow, that I look upon the retention of the book as a confession by our universities that they consider practice in shallow quibbling one of the essential disciplines of youth. Take, for instance, the distinction made between "Envy" and "Rejoicing at Evil" (*φθόνος* and *ἐπιχαίρεκακία*), in the second book of the Ethics, viz., that envy is grieved when any one meets with good-fortune; but "the rejoicer at evil so far misses grieving, as even to rejoice" (the distinction between the *good* and *evil*, as subjects of the emotion, being thus omitted, and merely the verbal opposition of grief and joy caught at); and conceive the result, in the minds of most youths, of being forced to take tricks of words such as this (and there are too many of them in even the best Greek writers) for subjects of daily study and admiration; the theory of the Ethics being, besides, so hopelessly untenable, that even quibbling will not always face it out,—nay, will not help it in exactly the first and most important example of virtue which Aristotle has to give, and the very one which we might have thought his theory would have fitted most neatly; for defining "temperance" as a mean, and intemperence as one relative extreme, not being able to find an opposite extreme, he escapes with the apology that the kind of person who sins in the other extreme

"has no precise name; because, on the whole, he does not exist!"

I know well the common censure by which objections to such futilities of so-called education are met, by the men who have been ruined by them,—the common plea that anything does to "exercise the mind upon." It is an utterly false one. The human soul, in youth, is *not* a machine of which you can polish the cogs with any kelp or brickdust near at hand; and, having got it into working order, and good, empty, and oiled serviceableness, start your immortal locomotive at twenty-five years old or thirty, express from the Strait Gate, on the Narrow Road. The whole period of youth is one essentially of formation, edification, instruction, I use the words with their weight in them; in taking of stores, establishment in vital habits, hopes, and faiths. There is not an hour of it but is trembling with destinies,—not a moment of which, once past, the appointed work can ever be done again, or the neglected blow struck on the cold iron. Take your vase of Venice glass out of the furnace, and strew chaff over it in its transparent heat, and recover *that* to its clearness and rubied glory when the north wind has blown upon it; but do not think to strew chaff over the child fresh from God's presence, and to bring the heavenly colors back to him—at least in this world.

ANCILLA DOMINI.

MODERN PAINTERS

VOLUME THE FIFTH

OF LEAF BEAUTY—OF CLOUD BEAUTY
OF IDEAS OF RELATION

To

THE LANDSCAPE ARTISTS OF ENGLAND

THIS WORK

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY THEIR SINCERE ADMIRER

THE AUTHOR

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PREFACE.

THE disproportion between the length of time occupied in the preparation of this volume, and the slightness of apparent result, is so vexatious to me, and must seem so strange to the reader, that he will perhaps bear with my stating some of the matters which have employed or interrupted me between 1855 and 1860. I needed rest after finishing the fourth volume, and did little in the following summer. The winter of 1856 was spent in writing the "Elements of Drawing," for which I thought there was immediate need; and in examining with more attention than they deserved some of the modern theories of political economy, to which there was necessarily reference in my addresses at Manchester. The Manchester Exhibition then gave me some work, chiefly in its magnificent Reynolds constellation; and thence I went on into Scotland, to look at Dumblane and Jedburgh, and some other favorite sites of Turner's; which I had not at all seen, when I received notice from Mr. Wornum that he had obtained for me permission, from the Trustees of the National Gallery, to arrange, as I thought best, the Turner drawings belonging to the nation; on which I returned to London immediately.

In seven tin boxes in the lower room of the National Gallery I found upwards of nineteen thousand pieces of paper, drawn upon by Turner in one way or another.

Many on both sides; some with four, five, or six subjects on each side (the pencil point digging spiritedly through from the foregrounds of the front into the tender pieces of sky on the back); some in chalk, which the touch of the finger would sweep away;* others in ink, rotted into holes; others (some splendid colored drawings among them) long eaten away by damp and mildew, and falling into dust at the edges, in capes and bays of fragile decay; others worm-eaten, some mouse-eaten, many torn half-way through; numbers doubled (quadrupled, I should say) up into four, being Turner's favorite mode of packing for travelling; nearly all rudely flattened out from the bundles in which Turner had finally rolled them up and squeezed them into his drawers in Queen Anne Street. Dust of thirty years' accumulation, black, dense, and sooty, lay in the rents of the crushed and crumpled edges of these flattened bundles, looking like a jagged black frame, and producing altogether unexpected effects in brilliant portions of skies, whence an accidental or experimental finger mark of the first bundle-unfolder had swept it away.

About half, or rather more, of the entire number consisted of pencil-sketches, in flat oblong pocket-books, dropping to pieces at the back, tearing laterally whenever opened, and every drawing rubbing itself into the one opposite. These first I paged with my own hand; then unbound; and laid every leaf separately in a clean sheet of perfectly smooth writing paper, so that it might receive no farther injury. Then, enclosing the contents and boards of each book (usually ninety-two leaves, more or less drawn on both sides, with two sketches on

* The best book of studies for his great shipwrecks contained about a quarter of a pound of chalk débris, black and white, broken off the crayons with which Turner had drawn furiously on both sides of the leaves; every leaf, with peculiar foresight and consideration of difficulties to be met by future mounters, containing half of one subject on the front of it, and half of another on the back.

the boards at the beginning and end) in a separate sealed packet, I returned it to its tin box. The loose sketches needed more trouble. The dust had first to be got off them (from the chalk ones it could only be blown off); then they had to be variously flattened; the torn ones to be laid down, the loveliest guarded, so as to prevent all future friction; and four hundred of the most characteristic framed and glazed, and cabinets constructed for them which would admit of their free use by the public. With two assistants, I was at work all the autumn and winter of 1857, every day, all day long, and often far into the night.

The manual labor would not have hurt me; but the excitement involved in seeing unfolded the whole career of Turner's mind during his life, joined with much sorrow at the state in which nearly all his most precious work had been left, and with great anxiety, and heavy sense of responsibility besides, were very trying; and I have never in my life felt so much exhausted as when I locked the last box, and gave the keys to Mr. Wornum, in May, 1858. Among the later colored sketches, there was one magnificent series, which appeared to be of some towns along the course of the Rhine on the north of Switzerland. Knowing that these towns were peculiarly liable to be injured by modern railroad works, I thought I might rest myself by hunting down these Turner subjects, and sketching what I could of them, in order to illustrate his compositions.

As I expected, the subjects in question were all on, or near, that east and west reach of the Rhine between Constance and Basle. Most of them are of Rheinfelden, Seckingen, Lauffenbourg, Schaffhausen, and the Swiss Baden.

Having made what notes were possible to me of these subjects in the summer (one or two are used in this volume), I was crossing Lombardy in order to examine some

points of the shepherd character in the Vaudois valleys, thinking to get my book finished next spring; when I unexpectedly found some good Paul Veroneses at Turin. There were several questions respecting the real motives of Venetian work that still troubled me not a little, and which I had intended to work out in the Louvre; but seeing that Turin was a good place wherein to keep out of people's way, I settled there instead, and began with Veronese's Queen of Sheba;—when, with much consternation, but more delight, I found that I had never got to the roots of the moral power of the Venetians, and that they needed still another and a very stern course of study. There was nothing for it but to give up the book for that year. The winter was spent mainly in trying to get at the mind of Titian; not a light winter's task; of which the issue, being in many ways very unexpected to me (the reader will find it partly told towards the close of this volume), necessitated my going in the spring to Berlin, to see Titian's portrait of Lavinia there, and to Dresden to see the Tribute Money, the elder Lavinia, and girl in white, with the flag fan. Another portrait, at Dresden, of a lady in a dress of rose and gold, by me unheard of before, and one of an admiral, at Munich, had like to have kept me in Germany all summer.

Getting home at last, and having put myself to arrange materials of which it was not easy, after so much interruption, to recover the command;—which also were now not reducible to a single volume—two questions occurred in the outset, one in the section on vegetation, respecting the origin of wood; the other in the section on sea, respecting curves of waves; to neither of which, from botanist or mathematicians, any sufficient answer seemed obtainable.

In other respects also the section on the sea was wholly unsatisfactory to me: I knew little of ships, nothing of blue open water. Turner's pathetic interest in the

sea, and his inexhaustible knowledge of shipping, deserved more complete and accurate illustration than was at all possible to me; and the mathematical difficulty lay at the beginning of all demonstration of facts. I determined to do this piece of work well, or not at all, and threw the proposed section out of this volume. If I ever am able to do what I want with it (and this is barely probable), it will be a separate book; which, on other accounts, I do not regret, since many persons might be interested in studies of the shipping of the old Nelson times, and of the sea-waves and sailor character of all times, who would not care to encumber themselves with five volumes of a work on Art.

The vegetation question had, however, at all cost, to be made out as best might be; and again lost me much time. Many of the results of this inquiry, also, can only be given, if ever, in a detached form.

During these various discouragements, the preparation of the Plates could not go on prosperously. Drawing is difficult enough, undertaken in quietness: it is impossible to bring it to any point of fine rightness with half-applied energy.

Many experiments were made in hope of expressing Turner's peculiar execution and touch by facsimile. They cost time, and strength, and, for the present, have failed; many elaborate drawings, made during the winter of 1858, having been at last thrown aside. Some good may afterwards come of these; but certainly not by reduction to the size of the page of this book, for which, even of smaller subjects, I have not prepared the most interesting, for I do not wish the possession of any effective and valuable engravings from Turner to be contingent on the purchasing a book of mine.*

* To Mr. Armytage, Mr. Cuff, and Mr. Cousen, I have to express my sincere thanks for the patience, and my sincere admiration of the skill, with which they have helped me. Their patience, especially,

Feebly and faultfully, therefore, yet as well as I can do it under these discouragements, the book is at last done; respecting the general course of which, it will be kind and well if the reader will note these few points that follow.

The first volume was the expansion of a reply to a magazine article; and was not begun because I then thought myself qualified to write a systematic treatise on Art; but because I at least knew, and knew it to be demonstrable, that Turner was right and true, and that his critics were wrong, false, and base. At that time I had seen much of nature, and had been several times in Italy, wintering once in Rome; but had chiefly delighted in northern art, beginning, when a mere boy, with Rubens and Rembrandt. It was long before I got quit of a boy's veneration for Rubens' physical art-power; and the reader will, perhaps, on this ground forgive the strong expressions of admiration for Rubens, which, to my great regret, occur in the first volume.

Finding myself, however, engaged seriously in the essay, I went, before writing the second volume, to study in Italy; where the strong reaction from the influence of Rubens threw me at first too far under that of Angelico and Raphael, and, which was the worst harm that came of that Rubens influence, blinded me long to the deepest qualities of Venetian art; which, the reader

has been put to severe trial by the rewardless toil required to produce facsimiles of drawings in which the slightness of subject could never attract any due notice to the exeellence of workmanship.

Aid, just as disinterested, and deserving of as earnest acknowledgment, has been given me by Miss Byfield, in her faultless faesimiles of my careless sketches; by Miss O. Hill, who prepared the copies which I required from portions of the pictures of the old masters; and by Mr. Robin Allen, in accurate line studies from nature, of which, though only one is engraved in this volume, many others have been most serviceable, both to it and to me.

may see by expressions occurring not only in the second, but even in the third and fourth volumes, I thought, however powerful, yet partly luxurious and sensual, until I was led into the final inquiries above related.

These oscillations of temper, and progressions of discovery, extending over a period of seventeen years, ought not to diminish the reader's confidence in the book. Let him be assured of this, that unless important changes are occurring in his opinions continually, all his life long, not one of those opinions can be on any questionable subject true. All true opinions are living, and show their life by being capable of nourishment; therefore of change. But their change is that of a tree —not of a cloud.

In the main aim and principle of the book, there is no variation, from its first syllable to its last. It declares the perfectness and eternal beauty of the work of God; and tests all work of man by concurrence with, or subjection to that. And it differs from most books, and has a chance of being in some respects better for the difference, in that it has not been written either for fame, or for money, or for conscience-sake, but of necessity.

It has not been written for praise. Had I wished to gain present reputation, by a little flattery adroitly used in some places, a sharp word or two withheld in others, and the substitution of verbiage generally for investigation, I could have made the circulation of these volumes tenfold what it has been in modern society. Had I wished for future fame, I should have written one volume, not five. Also, it has not been written for money. In this wealth-producing country, seventeen years' labor could hardly have been invested with less chance of equivalent return.

Also, it has not been written for conscience-sake. I had no definite hope in writing it; still less any sense of its being required of me as a duty. It seems to me,

and seemed always, probable, that I might have done much more good in some other way. But it has been written of necessity. I saw an injustice done, and tried to remedy it. I heard falsehood taught, and was compelled to deny it. Nothing else was possible to me. I knew not how little or how much might come of the business, or whether I was fit for it; but here was the lie full set in front of me, and there was no way round it, but only over it. To that, as the work changed like a tree, it was also rooted like a tree—not where it would, but where need was; on which, if any fruit grow such as you can like, you are welcome to gather it without thanks; and so far as it is poor or bitter, it will be your justice to refuse it without reviling.

MODERN PAINTERS.

PART VI.

OF LEAF BEAUTY.

CHAPTER I.

THE EARTH-VEIL.

§ 1. "To dress it and to keep it."

That, then, was to be our work. Alas! what work have we set ourselves upon instead! How have we ravaged the garden instead of kept it—feeding our war-horses with its flowers, and splintering its trees into spear-shafts!

"And at the East a flaming sword."

Is its flame quenchless? and are those gates that keep the way indeed passable no more? or is it not rather that we no more desire to enter? For what can we conceive of that first Eden which we might not yet win back, if we chose? It was a place full of flowers, we say. Well: the flowers are always striving to grow wherever we suffer them; and the fairer, the closer. There may indeed have been a Fall of Flowers, as a Fall of Man; but assuredly creatures such as we are can now fancy nothing lovelier than roses and lilies, which would grow for us side by side, leaf overlapping leaf, till the Earth was

white and red with them, if we cared to have it so. And Paradise was full of pleasant shades and fruitful avenues. Well: what hinders us from covering as much of the world as we like with pleasant shade, and pure blossom, and goodly fruit? Who forbids its valleys to be covered over with corn, till they laugh and sing? Who prevents its dark forests, ghostly and uninhabitable, from being changed into infinite orchards, wreathing the hills with frail-floretted snow, far away to the half-lighted horizon of April, and flushing the face of all the autumnal earth with glow of clustered food? But Paradise was a place of peace, we say, and all the animals were gentle servants to us. Well: the world would yet be a place of peace if we were all peacemakers, and gentle service should we have of its creatures if we gave them gentle mastery. But so long as we make sport of slaying bird and beast, so long as we choose to contend rather with our fellows than with our faults, and make battlefield of our meadows instead of pasture—so long, truly the Flaming Sword will still turn every way, and the gates of Eden remain barred close enough, till we have sheathed the sharper flame of our own passions, and broken down the closer gates of our own hearts.

§ 2. I have been led to see and feel this more and more, as I considered the service which the flowers and trees, which man was at first appointed to keep, were intended to render to him in return for his care; and the services they still render to him, as far as he allows their influence, or fulfils his own task towards them. For what infinite wonderfulness there is in this vegetation, considered, as indeed it is, as the means by which the earth becomes the companion of man—his friend and his teacher! In the conditions which we have traced in its rocks, there could only be seen preparation for his existence; —the characters which enable him to live on it safely, and to work with it easily—in all these it has been inan-

imate and passive; but vegetation is to it as an imperfect soul, given to meet the soul of man. The earth in its depths must remain dead and cold, incapable except of slow crystalline change; but at its surface, which human beings look upon and deal with, it ministers to them through a veil of strange intermediate being; which breathes, but has no voice; moves, but cannot leave its appointed place; passes through life without consciousness, to death without bitterness; wears the beauty of youth, without its passion; and declines to the weakness of age, without its regret.

§ 3. And in this mystery of intermediate being, entirely subordinate to us, with which we can deal as we choose, having just the greater power as we have the less responsibility for our treatment of the unsuffering creature, most of the pleasures which we need from the external world are gathered, and most of the lessons we need are written, all kinds of precious grace and teaching being united in this link between the Earth and Man: wonderful in universal adaptation to his need, desire, and discipline; God's daily preparation of the earth for him, with beautiful means of life. First a carpet to make it soft for him; then, a colored fantasy of embroidery thereon; then, tall spreading of foliage to shade him from sunheat, and shade also the fallen rain, that it may not dry quickly back into the clouds, but stay to nourish the springs among the moss. Stout wood to bear this leafage: easily to be cut, yet tough and light, to make houses for him, or instruments (lance-shaft, or plough-handle, according to his temper); useless it had been, if harder; useless, if less fibrous; useless, if less elastic. Winter comes, and the shade of leafage falls away, to let the sun warm the earth; the strong boughs remain, breaking the strength of winter winds. The seeds which are to prolong the race, innumerable according to the need, are made beautiful and palatable,

varied into infinitude of appeal to the fancy of man, or provision for his service: cold juice, or glowing spice, or balm, or incense, softening oil, preserving resin, medicine of styptic, febrifuge, or lulling charm: and all these presented in forms of endless change. Fragility or force, softness and strength, in all degrees and aspects; unerring uprightness, as of temple pillars, or undivided wandering of feeble tendrils on the ground; mighty resistances of rigid arm and limb to the storms of ages, or wavings to and fro with faintest pulse of summer streamlet. Roots cleaving the strength of rock, or binding the transience of the sand; crests basking in sunshine of the desert, or hiding by dripping spring and lightless cave; foliage far tossing in entangled fields beneath every wave of ocean—clothing with variegated, everlasting films, the peaks of the trackless mountains, or ministering at cottage doors to every gentlest passion and simplest joy of humanity.

§ 4. Being thus prepared for us in all ways, and made beautiful, and good for food, and for building, and for instruments of our hands, this race of plants, deserving boundless affection and admiration from us, become, in proportion to their obtaining it, a nearly perfect test of our being in right temper of mind and way of life; so that no one can be far wrong in either who loves the trees enough, and every one is assuredly wrong in both, who does not love them, if his life has brought them in his way. It is clearly possible to do without them, for the great companionship of the sea and sky are all that sailors need; and many a noble heart has been taught the best it had to learn between dark stone walls. Still if human life be cast among trees at all, the love borne to them is a sure test of its purity. And it is a sorrowful proof of the mistaken ways of the world that the "country," in the simple sense of a place of fields and trees, has hitherto been the source of reproach to its

inhabitants, and that the words "countryman," "rustic," "clown," "paysan," "villager," still signify a rude and untaught person, as opposed to the words "townsman," and "citizen." We accept this usage of words, or the evil which it signifies, somewhat too quietly; as if it were quite necessary and natural that country-people should be rude, and towns-people gentle. Whereas I believe that the result of each mode of life may, in some stages of the world's progress, be the exact reverse; and that another use of words may be forced upon us by a new aspect of facts, so that we may find ourselves saying: "Such and such a person is very gentle and kind—he is quite rustic; and such and such another person is very rude and ill-taught—he is quite urbane."

§ 5. At all events, cities have hitherto gained the better part of their good report through our evil ways of going on in the world generally;—chiefly and eminently through our bad habit of fighting with each other. No field, in the middle ages, being safe from devastation, and every country lane yielding easier passage to the marauders, peacefully-minded men necessarily congregated in cities, and walled themselves in, making as few cross-country roads as possible: while the men who sowed and reaped the harvests of Europe were only the servants or slaves of the barons. The disdain of all agricultural pursuits by the nobility, and of all plain facts by the monks, kept educated Europe in a state of mind over which natural phenomena could have no power; body and intellect being lost in the practice of war without purpose, and the meditation of words without meaning. Men learned the dexterity with sword and syllogism, which they mistook for education, within cloister and tilt-yard; and looked on all the broad space of the world of God mainly as a place for exercise of horses, or for growth of food.

§ 6. There is a beautiful type of this neglect of the

perfectness of the Earth's beauty, by reason of the passions of men, in that picture of Paul Uccello's of the battle of Sant' Egidio,* in which the armies meet on a country road beside a hedge of wild roses; the tender red flowers tossing above the helmets, and glowing between the lowered lances. For in like manner the whole of Nature only shone hitherto for man between the tossing of helmet-crests; and sometimes I cannot but think of the trees of the earth as capable of a kind of sorrow, in that imperfect life of theirs, as they opened their innocent leaves in the warm spring-time, in vain for men; and all along the dells of England her beeches cast their dappled shade only where the outlaw drew his bow, and the king rode his careless chase; and by the sweet French rivers their long ranks of poplar waved in the twilight, only to show the flames of burning cities, on the horizon, through the tracery of their stems: amidst the fair defiles of the Apennines, the twisted olive-trunks hid the ambushes of treachery; and on their valley meadows, day by day, the lilies which were white at the dawn were washed with crimson at sunset.

§ 7. And indeed I had once purposed, in this work, to show what kind of evidence existed respecting the possible influence of country life on men; it seeming to me, then, likely that here and there a reader would perceive this to be a grave question, more than most which we contend about, political or social, and might care to follow it out with me earnestly.

The day will assuredly come when men will see that it *is* a grave question; at which period, also, I doubt not, there will arise persons able to investigate it. For the present, the movements of the world seem little likely to be influenced by botanical law; or by any other considerations respecting trees, than the probable price of

* In our own National Gallery. It is quaint and imperfect, but of great interest.

timber. I shall limit myself, therefore, to my own simple woodman's work, and try to hew this book into its final shape, with the limited and humble aim that I had in beginning it, namely, to prove how far the idle and peaceable persons, who have hitherto cared about leaves and clouds, have rightly seen, or faithfully reported of them.

CHAPTER II.

THE LEAF ORDERS.

§ 1. As in our sketch of the structure of mountains it seemed advisable to adopt a classification of their forms, which, though inconsistent with absolute scientific precision, was convenient for order of successive inquiry, and gave useful largeness of view; so, and with yet stronger reason, in glancing at the first laws of vegetable life, it will be best to follow an arrangement easily remembered and broadly true, however incapable of being carried out into entirely consistent detail. I say, "with yet stronger reason," because more questions are at issue among botanists than among geologists; a greater number of classifications have been suggested for plants than for rocks; nor is it unlikely that those now accepted may be hereafter modified. I take an arrangement, therefore, involving no theory; serviceable enough for all working purposes, and sure to remain thus serviceable, in its rough generality, whatever views may hereafter be developed among botanists.

§ 2. A child's division of plants is into "trees and flowers." If, however, we were to take him in spring, after he had gathered his lapful of daisies, from the lawn into the orchard, and ask him how he would call those wreaths of richer floret, whose frail petals tossed their foam of promise between him and the sky, he would at once see the need of some intermediate name, and call them, perhaps, "tree-flowers." If, then, we took him to a birch-wood, and showed him that catkins were flowers,

as well as cherry-blossoms, he might, with a little help, reach so far as to divide all flowers into two classes; one, those that grew on ground; and another, those that grew on trees. The botanist might smile at such a division; but an artist would not. To him, as the child, there is something specific and distinctive in those rough trunks that carry the higher flowers. To him it makes the main difference between one plant and another, whether it is to tell as a light upon the ground, or as a shade upon the sky. And if, after this, we asked for a little help from the botanist, and he were to lead us, leaving the blossoms, to look more carefully at leaves and buds, we should find ourselves able in some sort to justify, even to him, our childish classification. For our present purposes, justifiable or not, it is the most suggestive and convenient. Plants are, indeed, broadly referable to two great classes. The first we may, perhaps, not inexpediently call TENTED PLANTS. They live in encampments, on the ground, as lilies; or on surfaces of rock, or stems of other plants, as lichens and mosses. They live —some for a year, some for many years, some for myriads of years; but, perishing, they pass as the tented Arab passes; they leave *no memorials of themselves*, except the seed, or bulb, or root, which is to perpetuate the race.

§ 3. The other great class of plants we may perhaps best call BUILDING PLANTS. These will *not* live on the ground, but eagerly raise edifices above it. Each works hard with solemn forethought all its life. Perishing, it leaves its work in the form which will be most useful to its successors—its own monument, and their inheritance. These architectural edifices we call "Trees."

It may be thought that this nomenclature already involves a theory. But I care about neither the nomenclature, nor about anything questionable in my description of the classes. The reader is welcome to give them what names he likes, and to render what account of them he

thinks fittest. But to us, as artists, or lovers of art, this is the first and most vital question concerning a plant: "Has it a fixed form or a changing one? Shall I find it always as I do to-day—this Parnassia palustris—with one leaf and one flower? or may it some day have incalculable pomp of leaves and unmeasured treasure of flowers? Will it rise only to the height of a man—as an ear of corn—and perish like a man; or will it spread its boughs to the sea and branches to the river, and enlarge its circle of shade in heaven for a thousand years?"

§ 4. This, I repeat, is the *first* question I ask the plant. And as it answers, I range it on one side or the other, among those that rest or those that toil: tent-dwellers, who toil not, neither do they spin; or tree-builders, whose days are as the days of the people. I find again, on farther questioning these plants who rest, that one group of them does indeed rest always, contentedly, on the ground, but that those of another group, more ambitious, emulate the builders; and though they cannot build rightly, raise for themselves pillars out of the remains of past generations, on which they themselves, living the life of St. Simeon Stylites, are called, by courtesy, Trees; being, in fact, many of them (palms, for instance) quite as stately as real trees.*

These two classes we might call earth-plants, and pillar-plants.

§ 5. Again, in questioning the true builders as to their modes of work, I find that they also are divisible into two great classes. Without in the least wishing the reader to accept the fanciful nomenclature, I think he

* I am not sure that this is a fair account of palms. I have never had opportunity of studying stems of Endogens, and I cannot understand the description given of them in books, nor do I know how far some of their branched conditions approximate to real tree-structure. If this work, whatever errors it may involve, provokes the curiosity of the reader so as to lead him to seek for more and better knowledge, it will do all the service I hope from it.

may yet most conveniently remember these as "Builders with the shield," and "Builders with the sword."

Builders with the shield have expanded leaves, more or less resembling shields, partly in shape, but still more in office; for under their lifted shadow the young bud of the next year is kept from harm. These are the gentlest of the builders, and live in pleasant places, providing food and shelter for man. Builders with the sword, on the contrary, have sharp leaves in the shape of swords, and the young buds, instead of being as numerous as the leaves, crouching each under a leaf-shadow, are few in number, and grow fearlessly, each in the midst of a sheaf of swords. These builders live in savage places, are sternly dark in color, and though they give much help to man by their merely physical strength, they (with few exceptions) give him no food, and imperfect shelter. Their mode of building is ruder than that of the shield-builders, and they in many ways resemble the pillar-plants of the opposite order. We call them generally "Pines."

§ 6. Our work, in this section, will lie only among the shield-builders, sword-builders, and plants of rest. The Pillar-plants belong, for the most part, to other climates. I could not analyze them rightly; and the labor given to them would be comparatively useless for our present purposes. The chief mystery of vegetation, so far as respects external form, is among the fair shield-builders. These, at least, we must examine fondly and earnestly.

CHAPTER III.

THE BUD.

§ 1. If you gather in summer time an outer spray of any shield-leaved tree, you will find it consists of a slender rod, throwing out leaves, perhaps on every side, perhaps on two sides only, with usually a cluster of closer leaves at the end. In order to understand its structure, we must reduce it to a simple general type. Nay, even to a very inaccurate type. For a tree-branch is essentially a complex thing, and no "simple" type can, therefore, be a right one.

This type I am going to give you is full of fallacies and inaccuracies; but out of these fallacies we will bring the truth, by casting them aside one by one.

§ 2. Let the tree spray be represented under one of these two types, A or B, Fig. 1, the cluster at the end being in each case supposed to consist of three leaves only (a most impertinent supposition, for it must at least have four, only the fourth would be in a puzzling perspective in A, and hidden behind the central leaf in B). So, receive this false type patiently. When leaves are set on the stalk one after another, as in A, they are called "alternate;" when placed as in B, "opposite." It is

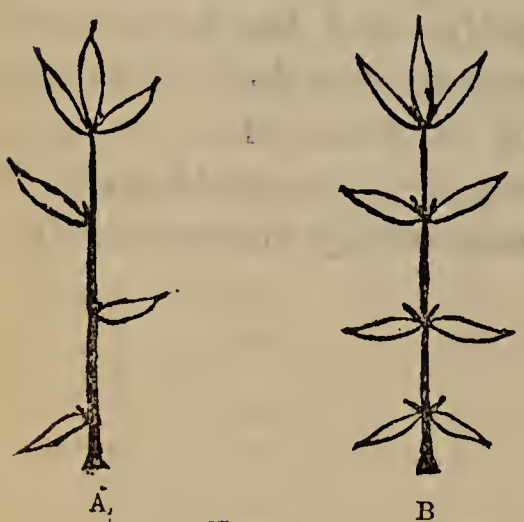


Fig. 1.

necessary you should remember this not very difficult piece of nomenclature.

If you examine the branch you have gathered, you will see that for some little way below the full-leaf cluster at the end, the stalk is smooth, and the leaves are set regularly on it. But at six, eight, or ten inches down, there comes an awkward knot; something seems to have gone wrong, perhaps another spray branches off there; at all events, the stem gets suddenly thicker, and you may break it there (probably) easier than anywhere else.

That is the junction of two stories of the building. The smooth piece has all been done this summer. At the knot the foundation was left during the winter.

The year's work is called a "shoot." I shall be glad if you will break it off to look at it; as my A and B types are supposed to go no farther down than the knot.

The alternate form A is more frequent than B, and some botanists think includes B. We will, therefore, begin with it.

§ 3. If you look close at the figure, you will see small projecting points at the roots of the leaves. These represent buds, which you may find, most probably, in the shoot you have in your hand. Whether you find them or not, they are there—visible, or latent, does not matter. Every leaf has assuredly an infant bud to take care of, laid tenderly, as in a cradle, just where the leaf-stalk forms a safe niche between it and the main stem. The child-bud is thus fondly guarded all summer; but its protecting leaf dies in the autumn; and then the boy-bud is put out to rough winter schooling, by which he is prepared for personal entrance into public life in the spring.

Let us suppose autumn to have come, and the leaves to have fallen. Then our A of Fig. 1, the buds only being left, one for each leaf, will appear as A B, in

Fig. 2. We will call the buds grouped at B, terminal buds, and those at *a*, *b*, and *c*, lateral buds.

Fig. 2.

This budded rod is the true year's work of the building plant, at that part of its edifice. You may consider the little spray, if you like, as one pinnacle of the tree-cathedral, which has taken a year to fashion; innumerable other pinnacles having been built at the same time on other branches.

§ 4. Now, every one of these buds, *a*, *b*, and *c*, as well as every terminal bud, has the power and disposition to raise himself in the spring, into just such another pinnacle as A B is.

This development is the process we have mainly to study in this chapter; but, in the outset, let us see clearly what it is to end in.

Each bud, I said, has the power and disposition to make a pinnacle of himself, but he has not always the opportunity. What may hinder him we shall see presently. Meantime, the reader will, perhaps, kindly allow me to assume that the buds *a*, *b*, and *c*, come to nothing, and only the three terminal ones build forward. Each of these producing the image of the first pinnacle, we have the type for our next summer bough of Fig. 3; in which observe the original shoot A B, has become thicker; its lateral buds having proved abortive, are now only seen as little knobs on its sides. Its ter-

Fig. 3.

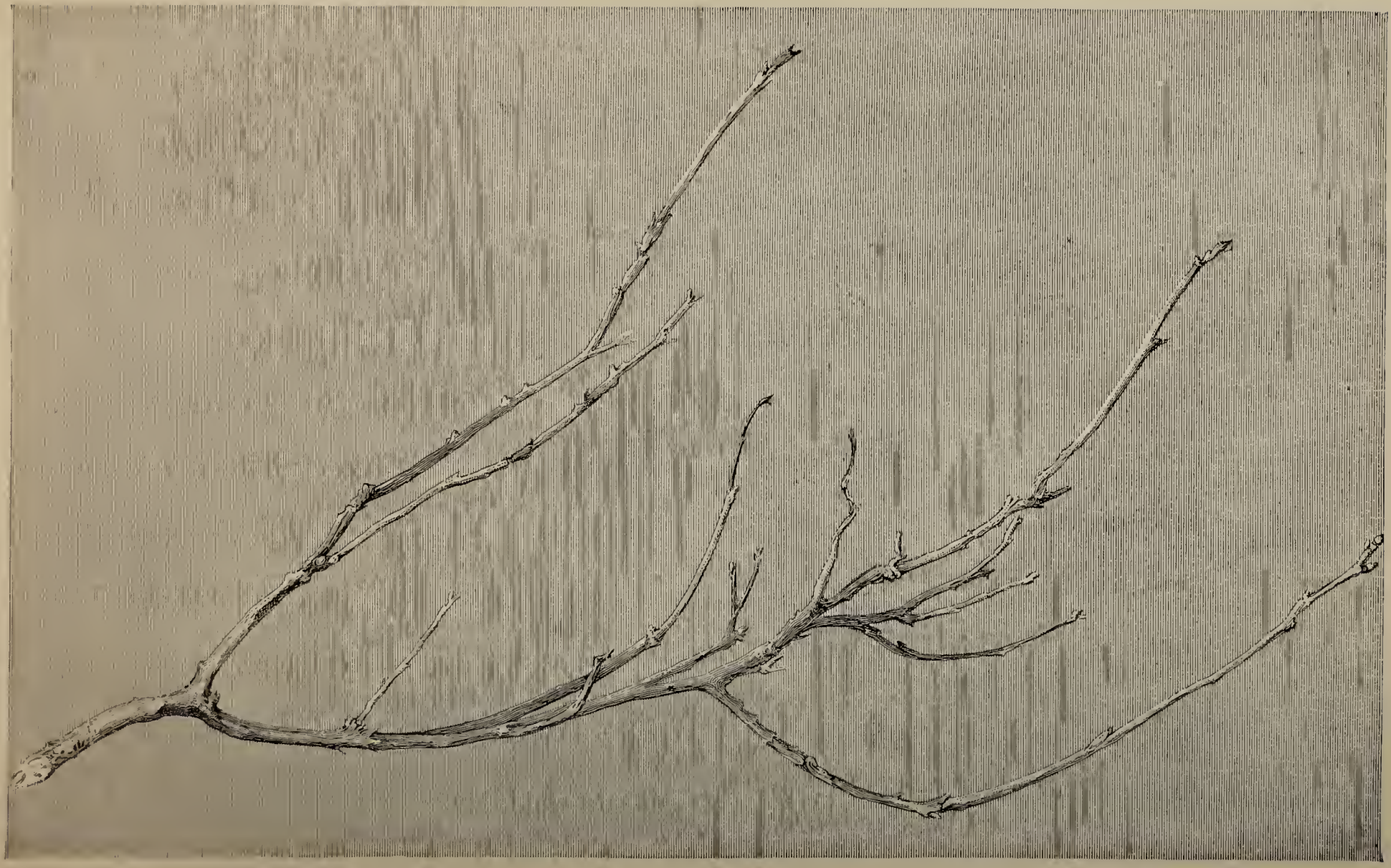


PLATE LII.—THE DRYAD'S TOIL.

minal buds have each risen into a new pinnacle. The central or strongest one B C, has become the very image of what his parent shoot A B, was last year. The two lateral ones are weaker and shorter, one probably longer than the other. The joint at B is the knot or foundation for each shoot above spoken of. Knowing now what we are about, we will go into closer detail.

§ 5. Let us return to the type in Fig. 2, of the fully accomplished summer's work: the rod with its bare buds. Plate 51, opposite, represents, of about half its real size, an outer spray of oak in winter. It is not growing strongly, and is as simple as possible in ramification. You may easily see, in each branch, the continuous piece of shoot produced last year. The wrinkles which make these shoots look like old branches are caused by drying, as the stalk of a bunch of raisins is furrowed (the oak-shoot fresh gathered is round as a grape-stalk). I draw them thus, because the furrows are important clues to structure. Fig. 4 is the top of one of these oak sprays magnified for reference. The little brackets, *x*, *y*, &c., which project beneath each bud and sustain it, are the remains of the leaf-stalks. Those stalks were jointed at that place, and the leaves fell without leaving a scar, only a crescent-shaped, somewhat blank-looking flat space, which you may study at your ease on a horse-chestnut stem, where these spaces are very large.

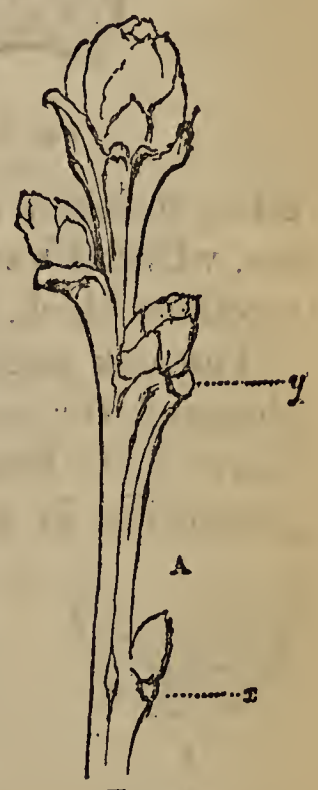


FIG. 4.

§ 6. Now if you cut your oak spray neatly through, just above a bud, as at A, Fig. 4, and look at it with a not very powerful magnifier, you will find it present the pretty section, Fig. 5.

That is the proper or normal section of an oak spray. Never quite regular. Sure to have one of the projections a little larger than the rest, and to have its bark (the black line) not quite regularly put round it, but exqui-

Fig. 5.

Fig. 6.

sitely finished, down to a little white star in the very centre, which I have not drawn, because it would look in the woodcut black, not white; and be too conspicuous.

The oak spray, however, will not keep this form unchanged for an instant. Cut it through a little way above your first section, and you will find the largest projection is increasing till, just where it opens * at

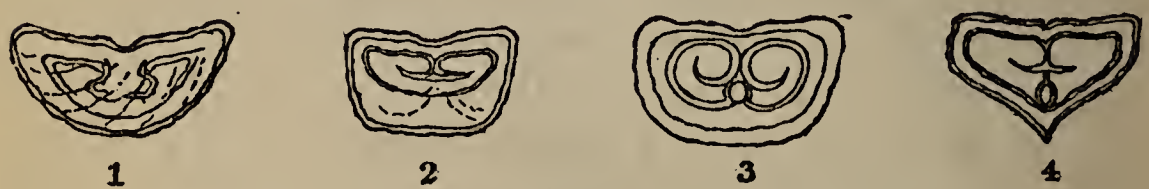


Fig. 7.

last into the leaf-stalk, its section is Fig. 6. If, therefore, you choose to consider every interval between bud and bud as one story of your tower or pinnacle, you find that there is literally not a hair's breadth of the work in which the *plan* of the tower does not change. You may see in

* The added portion, surrounding two of the sides of the pentagon, is the preparation for the stalk of the leaf, which, on detaching itself from the stem, presents variable sections, of which those numbered 1 to 4, Fig. 7, are examples. I cannot determine the proper normal form. The bulb-shaped spot in the heart of the uppermost of the five projections in Fig. 6 is the root of the bud.

Plate 51 that every shoot is suffused by a subtle (in nature an *infinitely* subtle) change of contour between bud and bud.

§ 7. But farther, observe in what succession those buds are put round the bearing stem. Let the section of the stem be represented by the small central circle in Fig. 8; and suppose it surrounded by a *nearly* regular pentagon (in the figure it is quite regular for clearness' sake). Let the first of any ascending series of buds be represented by the curved projection filling the nearest angle of the pentagon at 1. Then the next bud, above, will fill the angle at 2; the next above, at 3, the next at 4, the next at 5. The sixth will come nearly over the first. That is to say, each projecting portion of the section, Fig. 5, expands into its bud, not successively, but by leaps, always to the *next but one;* the buds being thus placed in a nearly regular spiral order.

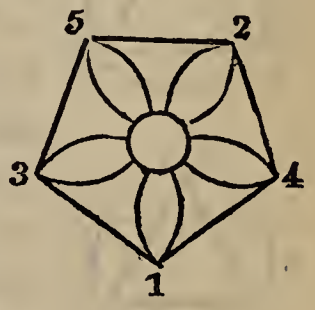


FIG. 8.

§ 8. I say nearly regular—for there are subtleties of variation in plan which it would be merely tiresome to enter into. All that we need care about is the general law, of which the oak spray furnishes a striking example, —that the buds of the first great group of alternate builders rise in a spiral order round the stem (I believe, for the most part, the spiral proceeds from right to left). And this spiral succession very frequently approximates to the pentagonal order, which it takes with great accuracy in an oak; for, merely assuming that each ascending bud places itself as far as it can easily out of the way of the one beneath, and yet not quite on the opposite side of the stem, we find the interval between the two must generally approximate to that left between 1 and 2, or 2 and 3, in Fig. 8.*

* For more accurate information the reader may consult Professor Lindley's *Introduction to Botany* (Longman, 1848), vol. i. p. 245, *et seqq.*

§ 9. Should the interval be consistently a little *less* than that which brings out the pentagonal structure, the plant seems to get at first into much difficulty. For, in such case, there is a probability of the buds falling into a triangle, as at A, Fig. 9; and then the fourth must come over the first, which would be inadmissible (we shall soon see why). Nevertheless, the plant seems to like the triangular result for its outline, and sets itself to get out of the difficulty with much ingenuity, by methods of succession, which I will examine farther in the next chapter: it being enough for us to know at present that the puzzled, but persevering, vegetable *does* get out of its difficulty and issues triumphantly, and with a peculiar expression of leafy exultation, in a hexagonal star, composed of two distinct triangles, normally as at B, Fig. 9. Why the buds do not like to be one above the other, we shall see in next chapter. Meantime I must shortly warn the reader of what we shall then discover, that, though we have spoken of the projections of our pentagonal tower as if they were first built to sustain each its leaf, they are themselves chiefly built by the leaf they seem to sustain. Without troubling ourselves about this yet, let us fix in our minds broadly the effective aspect of the matter, which is all we want, by a simple practical illustration

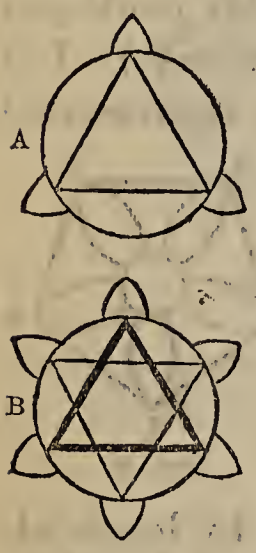


Fig. 9.

§ 10. Take a piece of stick half-an-inch thick, and a yard or two long, and tie large knots, at any *equal* distances you choose, on a piece of pack-thread. Then wind the pack-thread round the stick, with any number of equidistant turns you choose, from one end to the other, and the knots will take the position of buds in the general type of alternate vegetation. By varying the number of knots and the turns of the thread, you may get the system of any tree, with the exception of one character only—viz.,

that since the shoot grows faster at one time than another, the buds run closer together when the growth is slow. You cannot imitate this structure by closing the coils of your string, for that would alter the positions of your knots irregularly. The intervals between the buds are, by this gradual acceleration or retardation of growth, usually varied in lovely proportions. Fig. 10 shows the elevations of the buds on five different sprays of oak; A and B being of the real size (short shoots); C, D, and E, on a reduced scale. I have not traced the cause of the apparent tendency of the buds to follow in pairs, in these longer shoots.

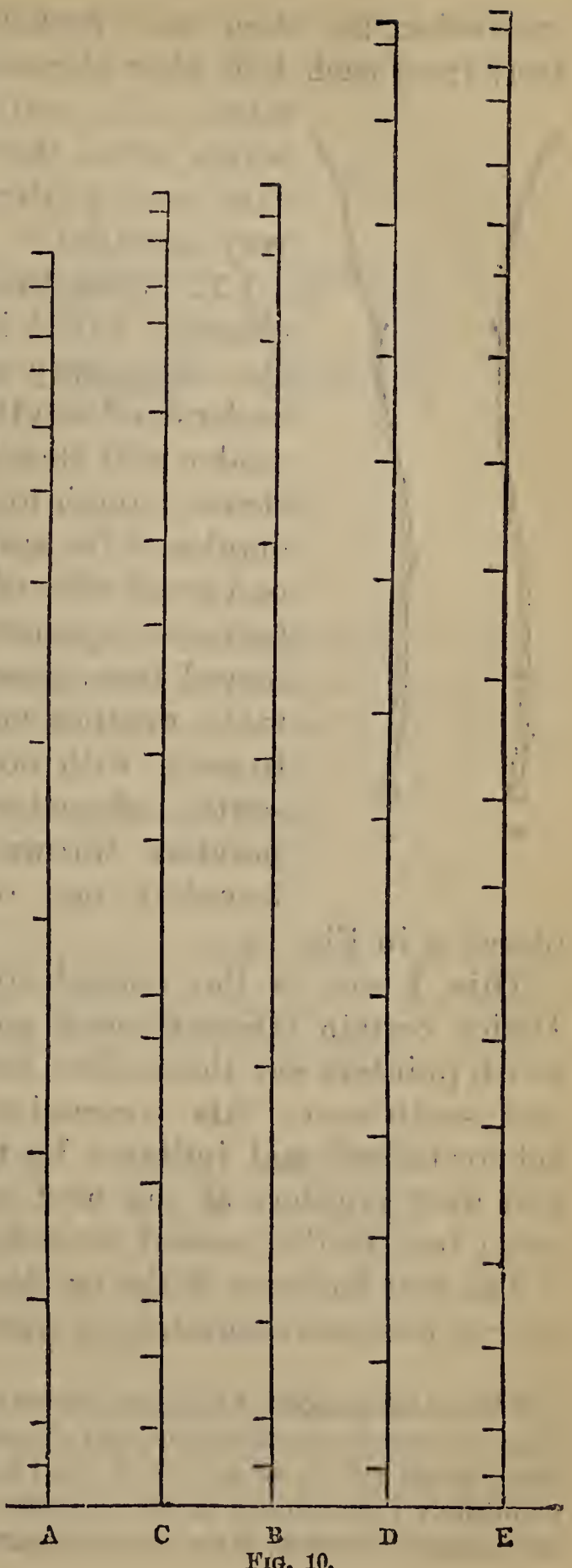


FIG. 10.

§ 11. Lastly: If the spiral be constructed so as to bring the buds nearly on opposite sides of the stem, though alternate in

succession, the stem, most probably, will shoot a little away from each bud after throwing it off, and thus establish the oscillatory form *b*, Fig. 11, which, when the buds are placed, as in this case, at diminishing intervals, is very beautiful.*

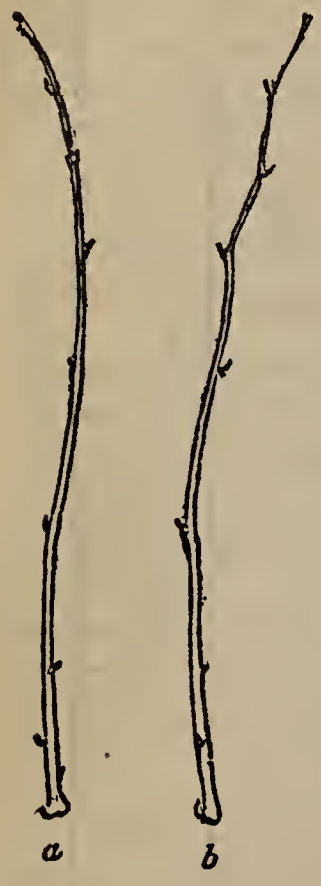


Fig. 11.

§ 12. I fear this has been a tiresome chapter; but it is necessary to master the elementary structure, if we are to understand anything of trees; and the reader will therefore, perhaps, take patience enough to look at one or two examples of the spray structure of the second great class of builders, in which the leaves are opposite. Nearly all opposite-leaved trees grow, normally, like vegetable weather-cocks run to seed, with north and south, and east and west pointers thrown off alternately one over another, as in Fig. 12.

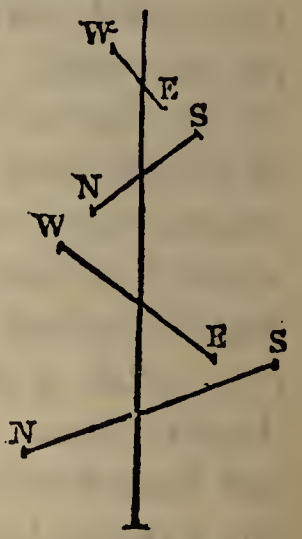


Fig. 12.

This, I say, is the normal condition. Under certain circumstances, north and south pointers set themselves north-east and south-west; this concession being acknowledged and imitated by the east and west pointers at the next opportunity; but, for the present, let us keep to our simple form.

The first business of the budding stem, is to get every pair of buds set accurately at right angles to the one be-

* Fig. 11 is a shoot of the line, drawn on two sides, to show its continuous curve in one direction, and alternated curves in another. The buds, which may be seen to be at equal heights in the two figures, are exquisitely proportioned in their distances. There is no end to the refinement of system, if we choose to pursue it.

low. Here are some examples of the way it contrives this. A, Fig. 13, is the section of the stem of a spray of

Fig. 13.

box, magnified eight or nine times, just where it throws off two of its leaves, suppose on north and south sides. The crescents below and above are sections through

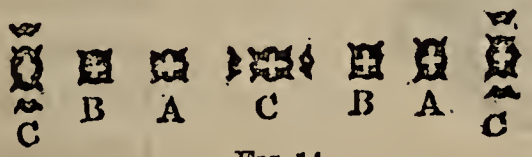


Fig 14.

the leaf-stalks thrown off on each side. Just above this joint, the section of the stem is B, which is the normal section of a box-stem, as Fig. 5 is of an oak's. This, as

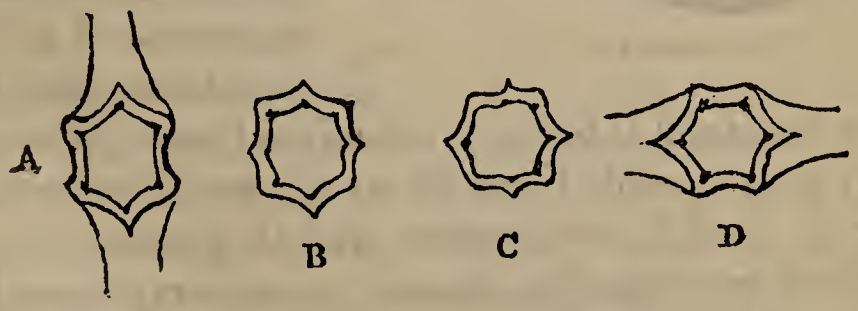


Fig. 15.

it ascends, becomes C, elongating itself now east and west; and the section next to C, would be again A turned that way; or, taking the succession completely through two joints, and of the real size, it would be thus: Fig.14.

The stem of the spotted aucuba is normally hexagonal, as that of the box is normally square. It is very dexterous and delicate in its mode of transformation to the two sides. Through the joint it is A, Fig. 15. Above joint, B, normal, passing on into C, and D for the next joint.

While in the horse-chestnut, a larger tree, and, as we shall see hereafter, therefore less regular in conduct, the section, normally hexagonal, is much rounded and softened into irregularities; A, Fig. 16, becoming, as it buds, B and C. The dark diamond beside C is a section through a bud, in which, however small, the quatrefoil disposition is always seen complete: the four little infant leaves with a queen leaf in the middle, all laid in their fan-shaped feebleness, safe in a white cloud of miniature woollen blanket.

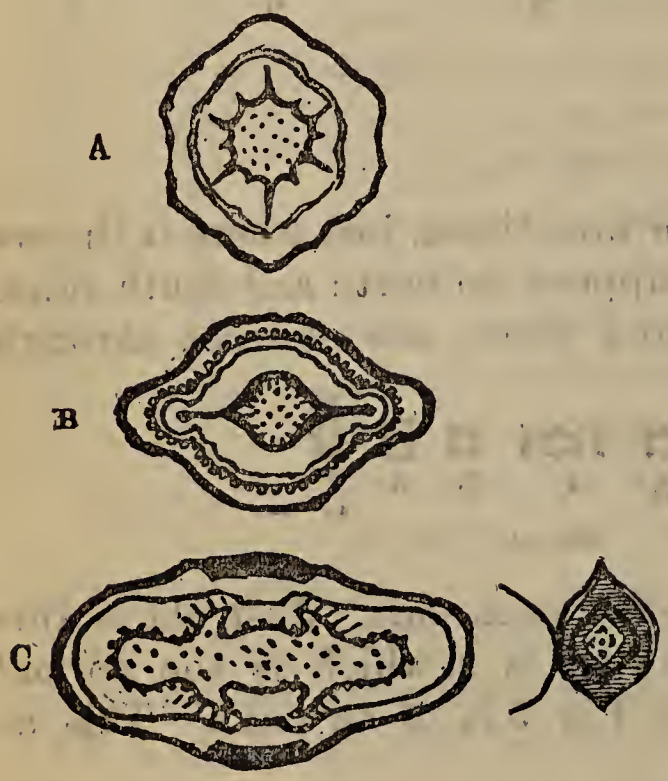


Fig. 16.

§ 13. The elementary structure of all important trees may, I think, thus be resolved into three principal forms: three-leaved, Fig. 9; four-leaved, Figs. 13 to 16; and five-leaved, Fig. 8. Or, in well-known terms, trefoil, quatrefoil, cinqfoil. And these are essential classes, more complicated forms being usually, it seems to me, resolvable into these, but these not into each other. The simplest arrangement (Fig. 11), in which the buds are nearly opposite in position, though alternate in elevation, cannot, I believe, constitute a separate class, being only an accidental con-

dition of the spiral. If it did, it might be called difoil; but the important classes are three:—

Trefoil, Fig. 9: Type, Rhododendron.
Quatrefoil, Fig. 13: Type, Horse-chestnut.
Cinqfoil, Fig. 5: Type, Oak.

§ 14. The coincidences between beautiful architecture and the construction of trees must more and more have become marked in the reader's mind as we advanced; and if he will now look at what I have said in other places of the use and meaning of the trefoil, quatrefoil, and cinqfoil, in Gothic architecture, he will see why I could hardly help thinking and speaking of all trees as builders. But there is yet one more subtlety in their way of building which we have not noticed. If the reader will look carefully at the separate shoots in Plate 52, he will see that the furrows of the stems fall in almost every case into continuous spiral curves, carrying the whole system of buds with them. This superinduced spiral action, of which we shall perhaps presently discover the cause, often takes place vigorously, producing completely twisted stems of great thickness. It is nearly always existent slightly, giving farther grace and change to the whole wonderful structure. And thus we have, as the final result of one year's vegetative labor on any single spray, a twisted tower, not similar at any height of its building: or (for, as we shall see presently, it loses in diameter at each bud) a twisted spire, correspondent somewhat in principle to the twisted spire of Dijon, or twisted fountain of Ulm, or twisted shafts of Verona. Bossed as it ascends with living sculpture, chiselled, not by diminution but through increase, it rises by one consistent impulse from its base to its minaret, ready, in spring-time, to throw round it at the crest at once the radiance of fresh youth and the promise of restoration

after that youth has passed away. A marvellous creation: nay, might we not almost say, a marvellous creature full of prescience in its infancy, foreboding even, in the earliest gladness of its opening to sunshine, the hour of fainting strength and falling leaf, and guarding under the shade of its faithful shields the bud that is to bear its hope through winter's shieldless sleep?

Men often look to bring about great results by violent and unprepared effort. But it is only in fair and forecast order, "as the earth bringeth forth her bud," that righteousness and praise may spring forth before the nations.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LEAF.

§ 1. HAVING now some clear idea of the position of the bud, we have next to examine the forms and structure of its shield—the leaf which guards it. You will form the best general idea of the flattened leaf of shield-builders by thinking of it as you would of a mast and sail. More consistently with our classification, we might perhaps say, by thinking always of the arm sustaining the shield; but we should be in danger of carrying fancy too far, and the likeness of mast and sail is closer, for the mast tapers as the leaf-rib does, while the hand holding the uppermost strap of the buckler clenches itself. Whichever figure we use, it will cure us of the bad habit of imagining a leaf composed of a short stalk with a broad expansion at the end of it. Whereas we should always think of the stalk as running right up the leaf to its point, and carrying the expanded, or foliate part, as the mast of a lugger does its sail. To some extent, indeed, it has yards also, ribs branching from the innermost one; only the yards of the leaf will not run up and down, which is one essential function of a sail-yard.

§ 2. The analogy will, however, serve one step more. As the sail must be on one side of the mast, so the expansion of a leaf is on one side of its central rib, or of its system of ribs. It is laid over them as if it were stretched over a frame, so that on the upper surface it is comparatively smooth; on the lower, barred. The understand-

ing of the broad relations of these parts is the principal work we have to do in this chapter.

§ 3. First, then, you may roughly assume that the section of any leaf-mast will be a crescent, as at *a*, Fig. 17 (compare Fig. 7 above). The flat side is the uppermost, the round side underneath, and the flat or upper side carries the leaf. You can at once see the convenience of this structure for fitting to a central stem. Suppose the central stem has a little hole in the centre, *b*, Fig. 17, and that you cut it down through the middle (as terrible knights used to cut their enemies in the dark ages, so that half the head fell on one side, and half on the other): Pull the two halves separate, *c*, and they will nearly represent the shape and position of opposite leaf-ribs. In reality the leaf-stalks have to fit themselves to the central stem, *a*, and as we shall see presently, to lap round it: but we must not go too fast.

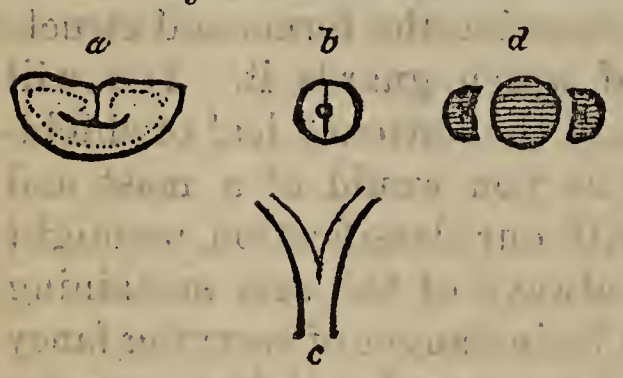


FIG. 17.

§ 4. Now, *a*, Fig. 17, being the general type of a leaf-

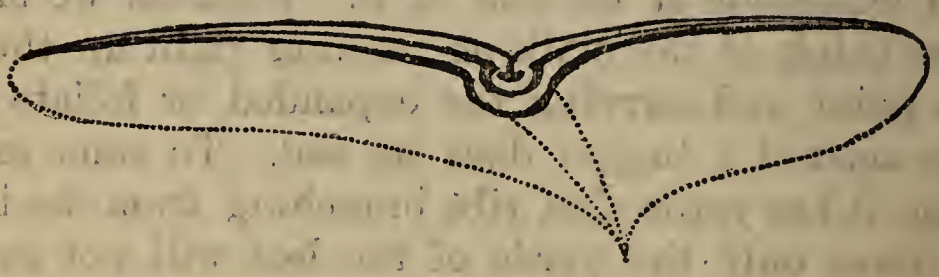


FIG. 18.

stalk, Fig. 18 is the general type of the way it expands into and carries its leaf; * this figure being the enlargement of a typical section right across any leaf, the dotted lines show the under surface foreshortened. You see I

* I believe the undermost of the two divisions of the leaf represents vegetable tissue *returning* from the extremity. See Lindley's *Introduction to Botany* (1848), vol. i. p. 253.

have made one side broader than the other. I mean that. It is typically so. Nature cannot endure two sides of a leaf to be alike. By encouraging one side more than the other, either by giving it more air or light, or perhaps in a chief degree by the mere fact of the moisture necessarily accumulating on the lower edge when it rains, and the other always drying first, she contrives it so, that if the essential form or idea of the leaf be *a*, Fig. 19, the actual form will always be *c*, or an approximate to it; one half being pushed in advance of the other, as at *b*, and all reconciled by soft curvature, *c*. The effort of the leaf to keep itself symmetrical rights it, however, often at the point, so that the insertion of the stalk only makes the inequality manifest. But it follows that the sides of a straight section across the leaf are unequal all the way up, as in my drawing, except at one point.

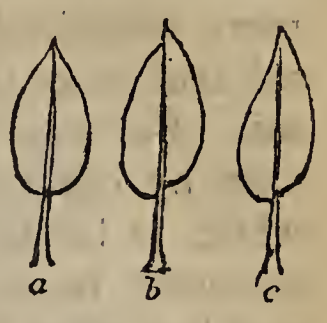


FIG. 19.

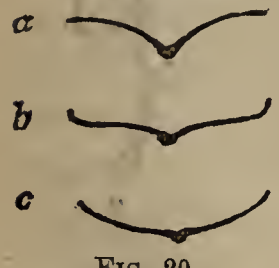


FIG. 20.

§ 5. I have represented the two wings of the leaf as slightly convex on the upper surface. This is also on the whole a typical character. I use the expression "wings of the leaf," because supposing we exaggerate the main rib a little, the section will generally resemble a bad painter's type of a bird (*a*, Fig. 20). Sometimes the outer edges curl up, *b*, but an entirely concave form, *c*, is rare. When *b* is strongly developed, closing well in, the leaf gets a good deal the look of a boat with a keel.

§ 6. If now you take this oblique form of sail, and cut it into any number of required pieces down to its mast, as in Fig. 21, A, and then suppose each of the pieces to contract into studding-sails at the side, you will have whatever type of divided leaf you choose to shape it for. In Fig. 21, A, B, I have taken the rose as the simplest type. The leaf is given in separate contour at C; but

that of the mountain ash, A, Fig. 22, suggests the original oval form which encloses all the subdivisions much more beautifully. Each of the studding-sails in this ash-leaf looks much at first as if he were himself a mainsail. But you may know him always to be a subordinate, by observing that the inequality of the two sides which is brought about by accidental influences in the mainsail, is an organic law in the studding-sail. The real leaf tries to set itself evenly on its mast; and the inequality is only a graceful concession to circumstances.

FIG. 21.

But the subordinate or studding-sail is always *by law* larger at one side than the other; and if he is himself again divided into smaller sails, he will have larger sails on the lowest side, or one more sail on the lowest side, than he has on the other. He always wears, therefore, a servant's, or, at least, a subordinate's dress. You may know him anywhere as not the master. Even in the ash leaflet, of which I have outlined one separately, B, Fig. 22, this is clearly seen; but it is much more distinct in more finely divided leaves.*

§ 7. Observe, then, that leaves are broadly divisible

* For farther notes on this subject, see my *Elements of Drawing*, p. 286.

into mainsails and studding-sails; but that the word *leaf* is properly to be used only of the mainsail; leaflet is the best word for minor divisions; and whether these minor members are only separated by deep cuts, or become complete stalked leaflets, still they are always to be thought of merely as parts of a true leaf.

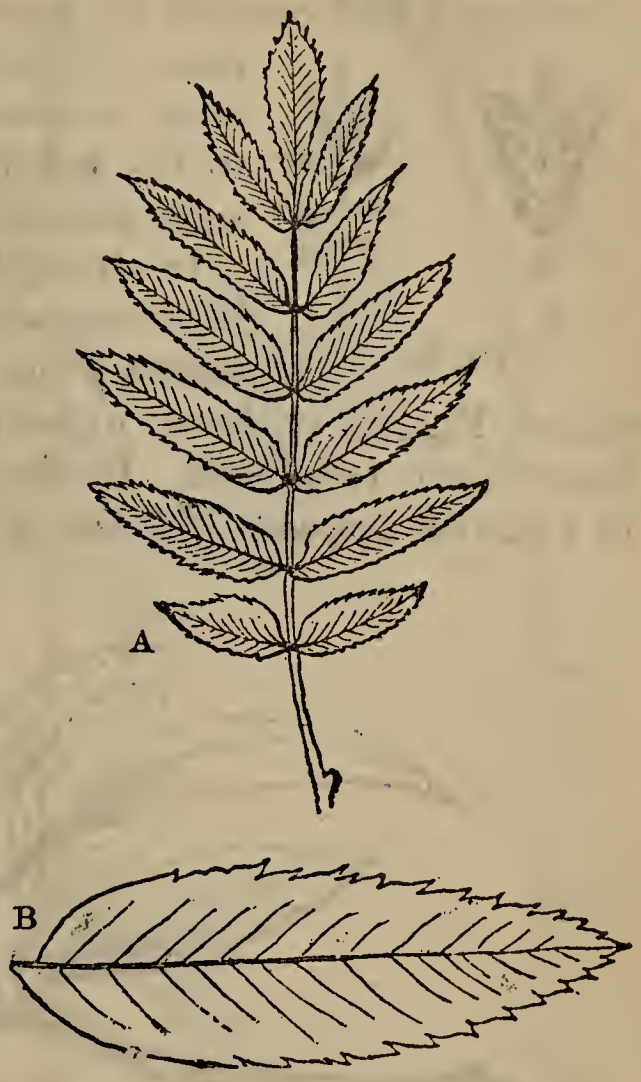


FIG. 22.

It follows from the mode of their construction that leaflets must always lie more or less *flat*, or edge to edge, in a continuous plane. This position distinguishes them from true leaves as much as their oblique form, and distinguishes them with the same delicate likeness of system; for as the true leaf takes, accidentally and partially, the oblique outline which is legally required in the subordinate, so the true leaf takes accidentally and partially the flat disposition which is legally required in the subordinate. And this point of position we must now study. Henceforward, throughout this chapter, the reader will please note that I speak only of true *leaves*, not of *leaflets*.

§ 8. LAW I. THE LAW OF DEFLECTION. — The first law, then, respecting position in true leaves, is that they fall gradually back from the uppermost one, or upper-

most group. They are never set as at *a*, Fig. 23, but always as at *b*. The reader may see at once that they have more room and comfort by means of the latter arrangement. The law is carried out with more or less distinctness according to the habit of the plant; but is always acknowledged.

a *b*

Fig. 23.

In strong-leaved shrubs or trees it is shown with great distinctness and beauty: the phillyrea shoot, for instance, Fig. 24, is almost in as true symmetry as a Greek honeysuckle ornament. In the hawthorn shoot, central in Plate 53, opposite, the law is seen very slightly, yet it

Fig. 24.

rules all the play and fantasy of the varied leaves, gradually depressing their lines as they are set lower. In crowded foliage of large trees the disposition of each separate leaf is not so manifest. For there is a strange coincidence in this between trees and communities of men. When the community is small, people fall more easily into their places, and take, each in his place, a firmer standing than can be obtained by the individuals of a great nation. The members of a vast community are separately weaker, as an aspen or elm leaf is thin, trem-

PLATE LIII.—SPIRALS OF THORN.

ulous, and directionless, compared with the spear-like setting and firm substance of a rhododendron or laurel leaf. The laurel and rhododendron are like the Athenian or Florentine republics; the aspen like England—strong-trunked enough when put to proof, and very good for making cartwheels of, but shaking pale with epidemic panic at every breeze. Nevertheless, the aspen has the better of the great nation, in that if you take it bough by bough, you shall find the gentle law of respect and room for each other truly observed by the leaves in such broken way as they can manage it; but in the nation you find every one scrambling for his neighbor's place.

This, then, is our first law, which we may generally

Fig. 25.

call the Law of Deflection; or, if the position of the leaves with respect to the root be regarded, of Radiation. The second is more curious, and we must go back over our ground a little to get at it.

§ 9. LAW II. The Law of Succession.—From what we saw of the position of buds, it follows that in every tree the leaves at the end of the spray, taking the direction given them by the uppermost cycle or spiral of the buds, will fall naturally into a starry group, expressive of the order of their growth. In an oak we shall have a cluster of five leaves, in a horse-chestnut of four, in a rhododendron of six, and so on. But observe, if we draw the oak leaves all equal, as at *a*, Fig. 25, or the chestnut's *(b)*, or the rhododendron's *(c)*, you instantly will feel, or ought to feel, that something is wrong; that

those are not foliage forms—not even normally or typically so—but dead forms, like crystals of snow. Considering this, and looking back to last chapter, you will see that the buds which throw out these leaves do not grow side by side, but one above another. In the oak and rhododendron, all five and all six buds are at different heights; in the chestnut, one couple is above the other couple.

§ 10. Now so surely as one bud is above another, it must be stronger or weaker than that other. The shoot may either be increasing in strength as it advances, or

FIG. 26.

declining; in either case, the buds must vary in power, and the leaves in size. At the top of the shoot, the last or uppermost leaves are mostly the smallest; of course always so in spring as they develop.

Let us then apply these conditions to our formal figure above, and suppose each leaf to be weaker in its order of succession. The oak becomes as *a*, Fig. 26, the chestnut shoot as *b*, the rhododendron, *c*. These, I should think, it can hardly be necessary to tell the reader, are true normal forms;—respecting which one or two points must be noticed in detail.

§ 11. The magnitude of the leaves in the oak star diminishes, of course, in alternate order. The largest leaf is the lowest, 1 in Figure 8, p. 37. While the larg-

est leaf forms the bottom, next it, opposite each other, come the third and fourth, in order and magnitude, and

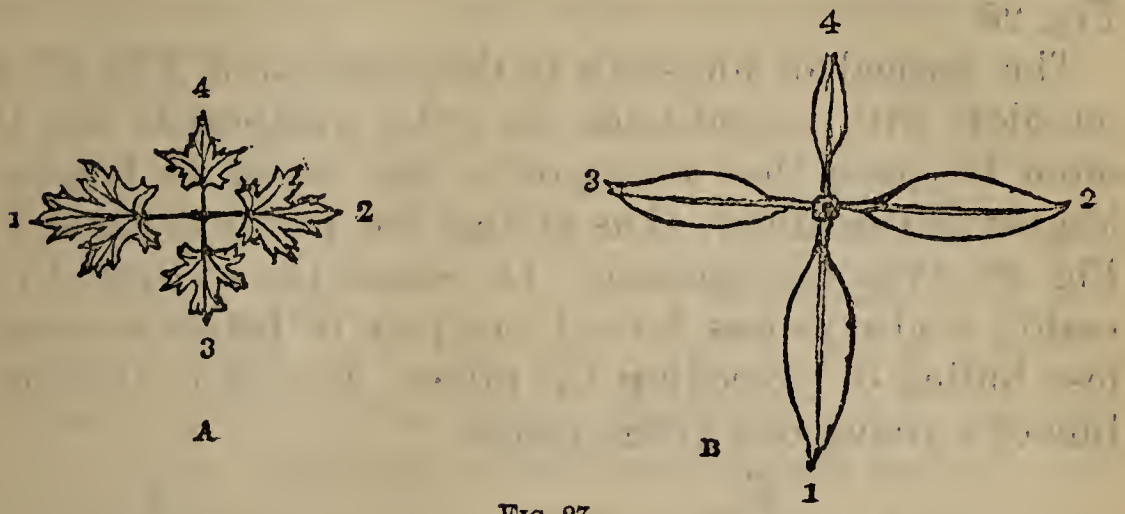


Fig. 27.

the fifth and second form the top. An oak star is, therefore, always an oblique star; but in the chestnut and other quatrefoil trees, though the uppermost couple of

Fig. 28.

leaves must always be smaller than the lowermost couple, there appears no geometrical reason why the opposite leaves of each couple should vary in size.

Nevertheless, they always do, so that the quatrefoil becomes oblique as well as the cinqfoil, as you see it is in Fig. 26.

The normal of four-foils is therefore as in Fig. 27, A (maple): with magnitudes, in order numbered; but it often happens that an opposite pair agree to become largest and smallest; thus giving the pretty symmetry, Fig. 27, B (spotted aucuba). Of course the quatrefoil in reality is always less formal, one pair of leaves more or less hiding or preceding the other. Fig. 28 is the outline of a young one in the maple.

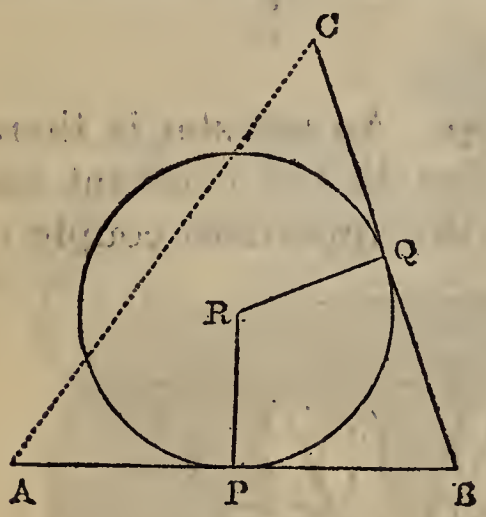


Fig. 29.

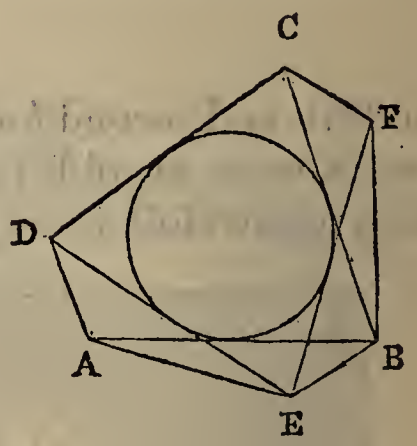


Fig. 30.

§ 12. The third form is more complex, and we must take the pains to follow out what we left unobserved in last chapter respecting the way a triplicate plant gets out of its difficulties.

Draw a circle as in Fig. 29, and two lines, A B, B C, touching it, equal to each other, and each divided accurately in half where they touch the circle, so that A P shall be equal to P B, B Q, and Q C. And let the lines A B and B C be so placed that a dotted line A C, joining their extremities, would not be much longer than either of them.

Continue to draw lines of the same length all round the circle. Lay five of them, A B, B C, C D, D E, E F. Then join the points A D, E B, and C F, and you have Fig. 30, which is a hexagon, with the following curious

properties. It has one side largest, C D, two sides less, but equal to each other, A E and B F; and three sides less still, and equal to each other, A D, C F, and B E.

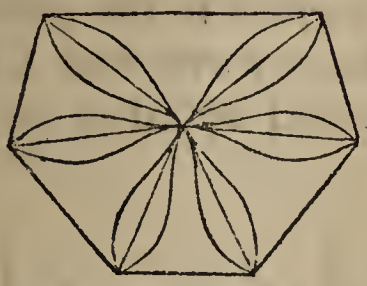


FIG. 31.

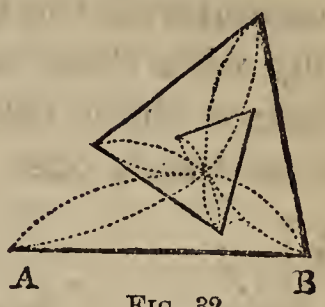


FIG. 32.

Now put leaves into this hexagon, Fig. 31, and you will see how charmingly the rhododendron has got out of its difficulties. The next cycle will put a leaf in at the gap at the top, and begin a new hexagon. Observe, however, this geometrical figure is only to the rhododendron what the *a* in Fig. 25 is to the oak, the icy or dead form. To get the living normal form we must introduce our law of succession. That is to say, the five lines A B, B C, &c., must continually diminish, as they proceed, and therefore continually approach the centre; roughly, as in Fig. 32.

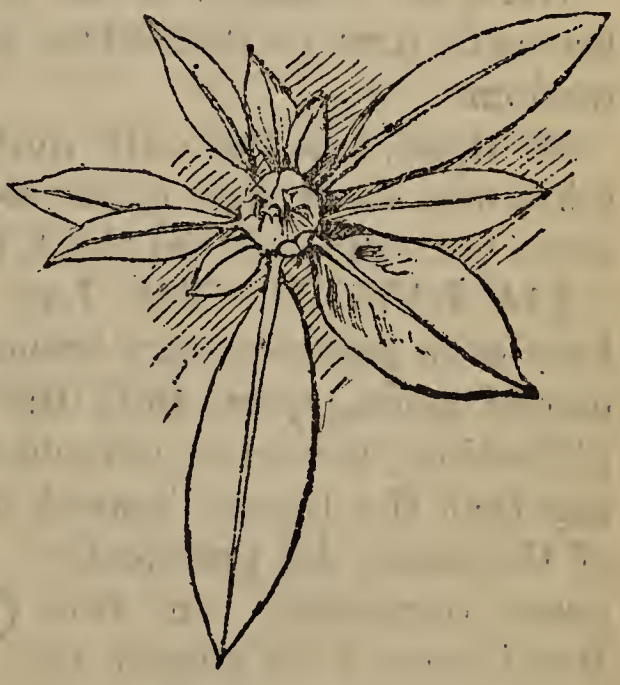


FIG. 33.

§ 13. I dread entering into the finer properties of this construction, but the reader cannot now fail to feel their beautiful result either in the cluster in Fig. 26, or here in Fig. 33, which is a richer and more oblique one. The three leaves of the uppermost triad are perfectly seen, closing over the bud; and the general form is clear,

though the lower triads are confused to the eye by unequal development, as in these complex arrangements is almost always the case. The more difficulties are to be encountered the more license is given to the plant in dealing with them, and we shall hardly ever find a rhododendron shoot fulfilling its splendid spiral as an oak does its simple one.

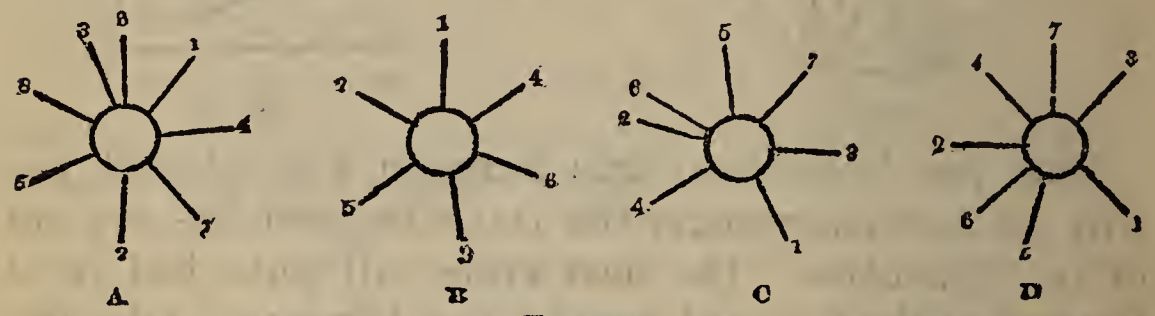


Fig. 34.

Here, for instance, is the actual order of ascending leaves in four rhododendron shoots which I gather at random.

Of these, A is the only quite well-conducted one; B takes one short step, C, one step backwards, and D, two steps back and one, too short, forward.

§ 14. LAW III. The Law of Resilience. — If you have been gathering any branches from the trees I have named among quatrefoils (the box is the best for exemplification), you have perhaps been embarrassed by finding that the leaves, instead of growing on four sides of the stem, did practically grow oppositely on two. But if you look closely at the places of their insertion, you will find they indeed spring on all four sides; and that in order to take the flattened opposite position, each leaf twists round on its stalk, as in Fig. 35, which represents a box-leaf magnified and foreshortened. The leaves do this in order to avoid growing downwards,

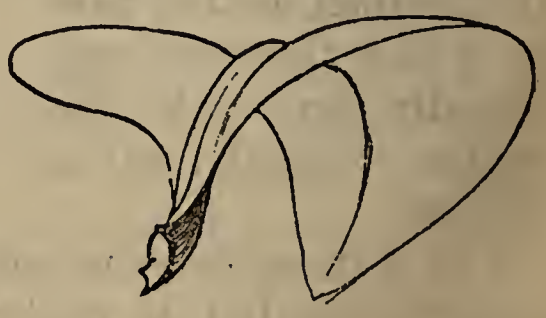


Fig. 35.

where the position of the bough and bud would, if the leaves regularly kept their places, involve downward growth. The leaves always rise up on each side from beneath, and form a flattened group, more or less distinctly in proportion to the horizontality of the bough, and the contiguity of foliage below and above. I shall not trouble myself to illustrate this law, as you have only to gather a few tree-sprays to see its effect. But you must note the resulting characters on *every* leaf; namely, that not one leaf in a thousand grows without a fixed turn in its stalk; warping and varying the whole of the curve on the two edges, throughout its length, and thus producing the loveliest conditions of its form. We shall presently trace the law of resilience farther on a larger scale: meanwhile, in summing the results of our inquiry thus far, let us remember that every one of these laws is observed with varying accuracy and gentle equity, according not only to the strength and fellowship of foliage on the spray itself, but according to the place and circumstances of its growth.

§ 15. For the leaves, as we shall see immediately, are the feeders of the plant. Their own orderly habits of succession must not interfere with their main business of finding food. Where the sun and air are, the leaf must go, whether it be out of order or not. So, therefore, in any group, the first consideration with the young leaves is much like that of young bees, how to keep out of each other's way, that every one may at once leave its neighbors as much free-air pasture as possible, and obtain a relative freedom for itself. This would be a quite simple matter, and produce other simply balanced forms, if each branch, with open air all round it, had nothing to think of but reconcilement of interests among its own leaves. But every branch has others to meet or to cross, sharing with them, in various advantage, what shade, or sun, or rain is to be had.

Hence every single leaf-cluster presents the general aspect of a little family, entirely at unity among themselves, but obliged to get their living by various shifts, concessions, and infringements of the family rules, in order not to invade the privileges of other people in their neighborhood.

§ 16. And in the arrangement of these concessions there is an exquisite sensibility among the leaves. They do not grow each to his own liking, till they run against one another, and then turn back sulkily; but by a watchful instinct, far apart, they anticipate their companions' courses, as ships at sea, and in every new unfolding of their edged tissue, guide themselves by the sense of each other's remote presence, and by a watchful penetration of leafy purpose in the far future. So that every shadow which one casts on the next, and every glint of sun which each reflects to the next, and every touch which in toss of storm each receives from the next, aid or arrest the development of their advancing form, and direct, as will be safest and best, the curve of every fold and the current of every vein.

§ 17. And this peculiar character exists in all the structures thus developed, that they are always visibly the result of a volition on the part of the leaf, meeting an external force or fate, to which it is never passively subjected. Upon it, as on a mineral in the course of formation, the great merciless influences of the universe, and the oppressive powers of minor things immediately near it, act continually. Heat and cold, gravity and the other attractions, windy pressure, or local and unhealthy restraint, must, in certain inevitable degrees, affect the whole of its life. But it is *life* which they affect; — a life of progress and will, — not a merely passive accumulation of substance. This may be seen by a single glance. The mineral—suppose an agate in the course of formation—shows in every line nothing

but a dead submission to surrounding force. Flowing, or congealing, its substance is here repelled, there attracted, unresistingly to its place, and its languid sinuosities follow the clefts of the rock that contains them, in servile deflexion and compulsory cohesion, impotently calculable, and cold. But the leaf, full of fears and affections, shrinks and seeks, as it obeys. Not thrust, but awed into its retiring; not dragged, but won to its advance; not bent aside, as by a bridle, into new courses of growth: but persuaded and converted through tender continuance of voluntary change.

§ 18. The mineral and it differing thus widely in separate being, they differ no less in modes of companionship. The mineral crystals group themselves neither in succession, nor in sympathy; but great and small recklessly strive for place, and deface or distort each other as they gather into opponent asperities. The confused crowd fills the rock cavity, hanging together in a glittering, yet sordid heap, in which nearly every crystal, owing to their vain contention, is imperfect, or impure. Here and there one, at the cost and in defiance of the rest, rises into unwarped shape or unstained clearness. But the order of the leaves is one of soft and subdued concession. Patiently each awaits its appointed time, accepts its prepared place, yields its required observance. Under every oppression of external accident, the group yet follows a law laid down in its own heart; and all the members of it, whether in sickness or health, in strength or languor, combine to carry out this first and last heart law; receiving, and seeming to desire for themselves and for each other, only life which they may communicate, and loveliness which they may reflect.

CHAPTER V.

LEAF ASPECTS.

§ 1. Before following farther our inquiry into tree structure, it will rest us, and perhaps forward our work a little, to make some use of what we know already.

It results generally from what we have seen that any group of four or five leaves presenting itself in its natural position to the eye, consists of a series of forms connected by exquisite and complex symmetries, and that these forms will be not only varied in themselves, but every one of them seen under a different condition of foreshortening.

The facility of drawing the group may be judged of by a comparison. Suppose five or six boats, very beautifully built, and sharp in the prow, to start all from one point, and the first bearing up into the wind, the other three or four to fall off from it in succession an equal number of points,* taking each, in consequence, a different slope of deck from the stem of the sail. Suppose, also, that the bows of these boats were transparent, so that you could see the under sides of their decks as well as the upper;—and that it were required of you to draw all their five decks, the under or upper side, as their curve showed it, in true foreshortened perspective, indicating the exact distance each boat had reached at a given moment from the central point they started from.

*I don't know that this is rightly expressed; but the meaning will be understood.

If you can do that, you can draw a rose-leaf. Not otherwise.

§ 2. When, some few years ago, the pre-Raphaelites began to lead our wandering artists back into the eternal paths of all great Art, and showed that whatever men drew at all, ought to be drawn accurately and knowingly; not blunderingly nor by guess (leaves of trees among other things): as ignorant pride on the one hand refused their teaching, ignorant hope caught at it on the other. "What!" said many a feeble young student to himself. "Painting is not a matter of science then, nor of supreme skill, nor of inventive brain. I have only to go and paint the leaves of the trees as they grow, and I shall produce beautiful landscapes directly."

Alas! my innocent young friend. "Paint the leaves as they grow!" If you can paint *one* leaf, you can paint the world. These pre-Raphaelite laws, which you think so light, lay stern on the strength of Apelles and Zeuxis; put Titian to thoughtful trouble; are unrelaxed yet, and unrelaxable forever. Paint a leaf indeed! Above-named Titian has done it: Correggio, moreover, and Giorgione: and Leonardo, very nearly, trying hard. Holbein, three or four times, in precious pieces, highest wrought. Raphael, it may be, in one or two crowns of Muse or Sibyl. If any one else, in later times, we have to consider.

§ 3. At least until recently, the perception of organic leaf form was absolutely, in all painters whatsoever, proportionate to their power of drawing the human figure. All the great Italian designers drew leaves thoroughly well, though none quite so fondly as Correggio. Rubens drew them coarsely and vigorously, just as he drew limbs. Among the inferior Dutch painters, the leaf-painting degenerates in proportion to the diminishing power in figure. Cuyp, Wouvermans,

and Paul Potter, paint better foliage than either Hobbima or Ruysdael.

§ 4. In like manner, the power of treating vegetation in sculpture is absolutely commensurate with nobleness of figure design. The quantity, richness, or deceptive finish may be greater in third-rate work; but in true understanding and force of arrangement the leaf and the human figure show always parallel skill. The leaf-mouldings of Lorenzo Ghiberti are unrivalled, as his bas-reliefs are, and the severe foliage of the Cathedral of Chartres is as grand as its queen-statues.

§ 5. The greatest draughtsmen draw leaves, like everything else, of their full-life size in the nearest part of the picture. They cannot be rightly drawn on any other terms. It is impossible to reduce a group so treated without losing much of its character; and more painfully impossible to represent by engraving any good workman's handling. I intended to have inserted in this place an engraving of the cluster of oak-leaves above Correggio's Antiope in the Louvre, but it is too lovely; and if I am able to engrave it at all, it must be separately, and of its own size. So I draw, roughly, instead, a group of oak-leaves on a young shoot, a little curled with autumn frost: Plate 54. I could not draw them accurately enough if I drew them in spring. They would droop and lose their relations. Thus roughly drawn, and losing some of their grace by withering, they, nevertheless, have enough left to show how noble leaf-form is: and to prove, it seems to me, that Dutch draughtsmen do not wholly express it. For instance, Fig. 3, Plate 55, is a facsimile of a bit of the nearest oak foliage out of Hobbima's Scene with the Watermill, No. 131, in the Dulwich Gallery. Compared with the real forms of oak-leaf, in Plate 54, it may, I hope, at least enable my readers to understand, if they choose, why, never having ceased to rate the Dutch painters

PLATE LIV.—THE DRYAD'S CROWN.

PLATE LV.—DUTCH LEAFAGE.

for their meanness or minuteness, I yet accepted the leaf-painting of the pre-Raphaelites with reverence and hope.

§ 6. No word has been more harmfully misused than that ugly one of "niggling." I should be glad if it were entirely banished from service and record. The only essential question about drawing is whether it be right or wrong; that it be small or large, swift or slow, is a matter of convenience only. But so far as the word may be legitimately used at all, it belongs especially to such execution as this of Hobbima's—execution which substitutes, on whatever scale, a mechanical trick or habit of hand for true drawing of known or intended forms. So long as the work is thoughtfully directed, there is no niggling. In a small Greek coin the muscles of the human body are as grandly treated as in a colossal statue; and a fine vignette of Turner's will show separate touches often more extended in intention, and stronger in result, than those of his largest oil pictures. In the vignette of the picture of Ginevra, at page 90 of Rogers's Italy, the forefinger touching the lip is entirely and rightly drawn, bent at the two joints, within the length of the thirtieth of an inch, and the whole hand within the space of one of those "niggling" touches of Hobbima. But if this work were magnified, it would be seen to be a strong and simple expression of a hand by thick black lines.

§ 7. Niggling, therefore, essentially means disorganized and mechanical work, applied on a scale which may deceive a vulgar or ignorant person into the idea of its being true:—a definition applicable to the whole of the leaf-painting of the Dutch landscapists in distant effect, and for the most part to that of their near subjects also. Cuyp and Wouvermans, as before stated, and others, in proportion to their power over the figure, drew leaves better in the foreground, yet never altogether well; for

though Cuyp often draws a single leaf carefully (weedy ground-vegetation especially, with great truth), he never felt the connection of leaves, but scattered them on the boughs at random. Fig. 1 in Plate 55 is nearly a *facsimile* of part of the branch on the left side in our National Gallery picture. Its entire want of grace and organization ought to be felt at a glance, after the work we have gone through. The average conditions of leafage-painting among the Dutch are better represented by Fig. 2, Plate 55, which is a piece of the foliage from the Cuyp in the Dulwich Gallery, No. 163. It is merely wrought with a mechanical play of brush in a well-trained hand, gradating the color irregularly and agreeably, but with no more feeling or knowledge of leafage than a paperstainer shows in graining a pattern. A bit of the stalk is seen on the left; it might just as well have been on the other side, for any connection the leaves have with it. As the leafage retires into distance, the Dutch painters merely diminish their *scale* of touch. The touch itself remains the same, but its effect is falser; for though the separate stains or blots in Fig. 2, do not rightly represent the forms of leaves, they may not inaccurately represent the number of leaves on that spray. But in distance, when, instead of one spray, we have thousands in sight, no human industry, nor possible diminution of touch can represent their mist of foliage, and the Dutch work becomes doubly base, by reason of false form, and lost infinity.

§ 8. Hence what I said in our first inquiry about foliage, "A single dusty roll of Turner's brush is more truly expressive of the infinitude of foliage than the niggling of Hobbima could have rendered his canvas, if he had worked on it till doomsday." And this brings me to the main difficulty I have had in preparing this section. That infinitude of Turner's execution attaches not only to his distant work, but in due degree to the nearest

PLATE LVI.—BY THE WAYSIDE.

pieces of his trees. As I have shown in the chapter on mystery, he perfected the system of art, as applicable to landscape, by the introduction of this infiniteness. In other qualities he is often only equal, in some inferior, to great preceding painters; but in this mystery he stands alone. He could not paint a cluster of leaves better than Titian; but he could a bough, much more a distant mass of foliage. No man ever before painted a distant tree rightly, or a full-leaved branch rightly. All Titian's distant branches are ponderous flakes, as if covered with sea-weed, while Veronese's and Raphael's are conventional, being exquisitely ornamental arrangements of small perfect leaves. See the background of the Parnassus in Volpato's plate. It is very lovely, however.

§ 9. But this peculiar execution of Turner's is entirely uncopiable; least of all to be copied in engraving. It is at once so dexterous and so keenly cunning, swiftest play of hand being applied with concentrated attention on every movement, that no care in facsimile will render it. The delay in the conclusion of this work has been partly caused by the failure of repeated attempts to express this execution. I see my way now to some partial result; but must get the writing done, and give undivided care to it before I attempt to produce costly plates. Meanwhile, the little cluster of foliage opposite, from the thicket which runs up the bank on the right-hand side of the drawing of Richmond, looking up the river, in the Yorkshire series, will give the reader some idea of the mingled definiteness and mystery of Turner's work, as opposed to the mechanism of the Dutch on the one side, and the conventional severity of the Italians on the other. It should be compared with the published engraving in the Yorkshire series; for just as much increase, both in quantity and refinement, would be necessary in every portion of the picture, be-

fore any true conception could be given of the richness of Turner's designs. A fragment of distant foliage I may give farther on; but, in order to judge rightly of either example, we must know one or two points in the structure of branches, requiring yet some irksome patience of inquiry, which I am compelled to ask the reader to grant me through another two chapters.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BRANCH.

§ 1. We have hitherto spoken of each shoot as either straight or only warped by its spiral tendency; but no shoot of any length, except those of the sapling, ever can be straight; for, as the family of leaves which it bears are forced unanimously to take some given direction in search of food or light, the stalk necessarily obeys the same impulse, and bends itself so as to sustain them in their adopted position, with the greatest ease to itself and comfort for them.

In doing this, it has two main influences to comply or contend with: the first, the direct action of the leaves in drawing it this way or that, as they themselves seek particular situations; the second, the pressure of their absolute weight after they have taken their places, depressing each bough in a given degree; the leverage increasing as the leaf extends. To these principal forces may frequently be added that of some prevalent wind, which, on a majority of days in the year, bends the bough, leaves and all, for hours together, out of its normal position. Owing to these three forces, the shoot is nearly sure to be curved in at least two directions;* that is to say, not merely as the rim of a wine-glass is curved (so that, looking at it horizontally, the circle becomes a straight line), but as the edge of a lip or an eyebrow is curved, partly upwards, partly forwards, so

* See the note on Fig. 11, at page 40, which shows these two directions in a shoot of lime.

that in no possible perspective can it be seen as a straight line. Similarly, no perspective will usually bring a shoot of a free-growing tree to appear a straight line.

§ 2. It is evident that the more leaves the stalk has to sustain, the more strength it requires. It might appear, therefore, not unadvisable, that every leaf should, as it grew, pay a small tax to the stalk for its sustenance; so that there might be no fear of any number of leaves being too oppressive to their bearer. Which, accordingly, is just what the leaves do. Each, from the moment of his complete majority, pays a stated tax to the stalk; that is to say, collects for it a certain quantity of wood, or materials for wood, and sends this wood, or what ultimately will become wood, *down* the stalk to add to its thickness.

§ 3. "Down the stalk?" yes, and down a great way farther. For, as the leaves, if they did not thus contribute to their own support, would soon be too heavy for the spray, so if the spray, with its family of leaves, contributed nothing to the thickness of the branch, the leaf-families would soon break down their sustaining branches. And, similarly, if the branches gave nothing to the stem, the stem would soon fall under its boughs. Therefore, by a power of which I believe no sufficient account exists,* as each leaf adds to the thickness of the shoot, so each shoot to the branch, so each branch to

* I find that the office and nature of cambium, the causes of the action of the sap, and the real mode of the formation of buds, are all still under the investigation of botanists. I do not lose time in stating the doubts or probabilities which exist on these subjects. For us, the mechanical fact of the increase of thickness by every leaf's action is all that needs attention. The reader who wishes for information as accurate as the present state of science admits, may consult Lindley's *Introduction to Botany*, and an interesting little book by Dr. Alexander Harvey on *Trees and their Nature* (Nisbet & Co., 1856), to which I owe much help.

the stem, and that with so perfect an order and regularity of duty, that from every leaf in all the countless crowd at the tree's summit, one slender fibre, or at least fibre's thickness of wood, descends through shoot, through spray, through branch, and through stem; and having thus added, in its due proportion, to form the strength of the tree, labors yet farther and more painfully to provide for its security; and thrusting forward into the root, loses nothing of its mighty energy, until, mining through the darkness, it has taken hold in cleft of rock or depth of earth, as extended as the sweep of its green crest in the free air.

§ 4. Such, at least, is the mechanical aspect of the tree. The work of its construction, considered as a branch tower, partly propped by buttresses, partly lashed by cables, is thus shared in by every leaf. But considering it as a living body to be nourished, it is probably an inaccurate analogy to speak of the leaves being taxed for the enlargement of the trunk. Strictly speaking, the trunk enlarges by sustaining them. For each leaf, however far removed from the ground, stands in need of nourishment derived from the ground, as well as of that which it finds in the air; and it simply sends its root down along the stem of the tree, until it reaches the ground and obtains the necessary mineral elements. The trunk has been therefore called by some botanists "a bundle of roots," but I think inaccurately. It is rather a messenger to the roots.* A root, properly so called, is a fibre, spongy or absorbent at the extremity, which secretes certain elements from the earth. The stem is by this definition no more a cluster of roots than a cluster of leaves, but a channel of intercourse between the roots and the leaves. It can gather no nourishment. It only carries nourishment, being, in fact, a group of canals for the conveyance of marketable

* In the true sense a "mediator" (μεσίτης).

commodities, with an electric telegraph attached to each, transmitting messages from leaf to root, and root to leaf, up and down the tree. But whatever view we take of the operative causes, the external and visible fact is simply that every leaf does send down from its stalk a slender thread of woody matter along the sides of the shoot it grows upon; and that the increase of thickness in stem, proportioned to the advance of the leaves, corresponds with an increase of thickness in roots, proportioned to the advance of their outer fibres. How far interchange of elements takes place between root and leaf, it is not our work here to examine; the general and broad idea is this, that the whole tree is fed partly by the earth, partly by the air; strengthened and sustained by the one, agitated and educated by the other; all of it which is best, in substance, life, and beauty, being drawn more from the dew of heaven than the fatness of the earth. The results of this nourishment of the bough by the leaf in external aspect, are the object of our immediate inquiry.

§ 5. Hitherto we have considered the shoot as an ascending body, throwing off buds at intervals. This it is indeed; but the part of it which ascends is not seen externally. Look back to Plate 52. You will observe that each shoot is furrowed, and that the ridges between the furrows rise in slightly spiral lines, terminating in the armlets under the buds which bore last year's leaves. These ridges, which rib the shoot so distinctly, are not on the ascending part of it. They are the contributions of each successive leaf thrown out as it ascended. Every leaf sent down a slender cord, covering and clinging to the shoot beneath, and increasing its thickness. Each, according to his size and strength, wove his little strand of cable, as a spider his thread; and cast it down the side of the springing tower by a marvellous magic—irresistible! The fall of a granite pyramid from an Alp

may perhaps be stayed; the descending force of that silver thread shall not be stayed. It will split the rocks themselves at its roots, if needs be, rather than fail in its work.

So many leaves, so many silver cords. Count—for by just the thickness of one cord, beneath each leaf, let fall in fivefold order round and round, the shoot increases in thickness to its root:—a spire built downwards from the heaven.

And now we see why the leaves dislike being above each other. Each seeks a vacant place, where he may freely let fall the cord. The turning aside of the cable to avoid the buds beneath, is one of the main causes of spiral curvature, as the shoot increases. It required all the care I could give to the drawing, and all Mr. Armytage's skill in engraving Plate 52, to express, though drawing them nearly of their full size, the principal courses of curvature in even this least graceful of trees.

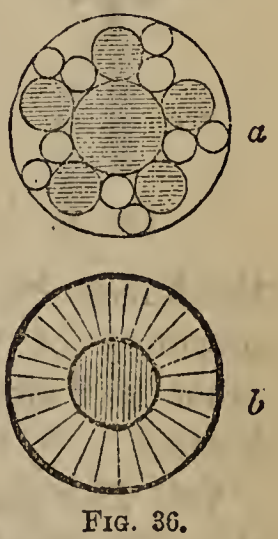


Fig. 36.

§ 6. According to the structure thus ascertained, the body of the shoot may at any point be considered as formed by a central rod, represented by the shaded inner circle, *a*, Fig. 36, surrounded by as many rods of descending external wood as there are leaves above the point where the section is made. The first five leaves above send down the first dark rods; and the next above send down those between, which, being from younger leaves, are less liable to interstices; then the third group sending down the side, it will be seen at a glance how a spiral action is produced. It would lead us into too subtile detail, if I traced the forces of this spiral superimposition. I must be content to let the reader peruse this part of the subject for himself, if it amuses him, and lead to larger questions.

§ 7. Broadly and practically, we may consider the whole cluster of woody material in Fig. 36 as one circle of fibrous substance formed round a small central rod. The real appearance in most trees is approximately as in *b*, Fig. 36, the radiating structure becoming more distinct in proportion to the largeness and compactness of the wood.*

Now, the next question is, how this descending external coating of wood will behave itself when it comes to the forking of the shoots. To simplify the examination of this, let us suppose the original or growing shoot (whose section is the shaded inner circle in Fig. 36) to have been in the form of a letter Y, and no thicker than a stout iron wire, as in Fig. 37. Down the arms of this letter Y, we have two fibrous streams running in the direction of the arrows. If the depth or thickness of these streams be such as at *b* and *c*, what will their thickness be when they unite at *e?* Evidently, the quantity of wood surrounding the vertical wire at *e* must be twice as great as that surrounding the wires *b* and *c*.

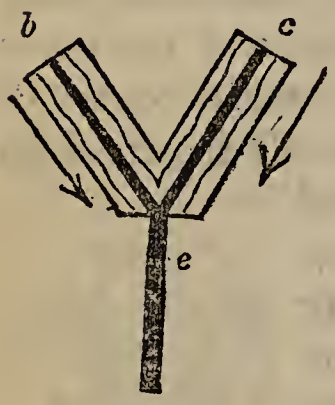


FIG. 37.

§ 8. The reader will, perhaps, be good enough to take it on my word (if he does not know enough of geometry to ascertain), that the large circle, in Fig. 38, contains twice as much area as either of the two smaller circles. Putting these circles in position, so as to guide us, and supposing the trunk to be bounded by straight lines, we have for the outline of the fork that in Fig. 38. How, then, do the two minor circles change into one large one? The section of the stem at *a* is a circle;

* The gradual development of this radiating structure, which is organic and essential, composed of what are called by botanists medullary rays, is still a great mystery and wonder to me.

and at *b*, is a circle; and at *c*, a circle. But what is it at *e*? Evidently, if the two circles merely united gradually, without change of form through a series of figures, such as those at the top of Fig. 39, the quantity of wood, instead of remaining the same, would diminish from the contents of two circles to the contents of one. So for every loss which the circles sustain at this junction, an equal quantity of wood must be thrust out somehow to the side. Thus, to enable the circles to run into each other, as far as shown at *b*, in Fig. 39, there must be a

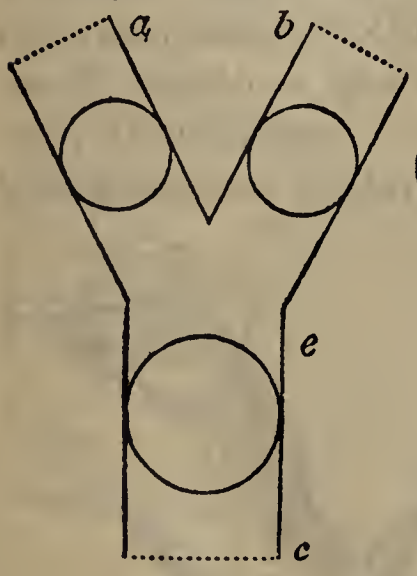


FIG. 38.

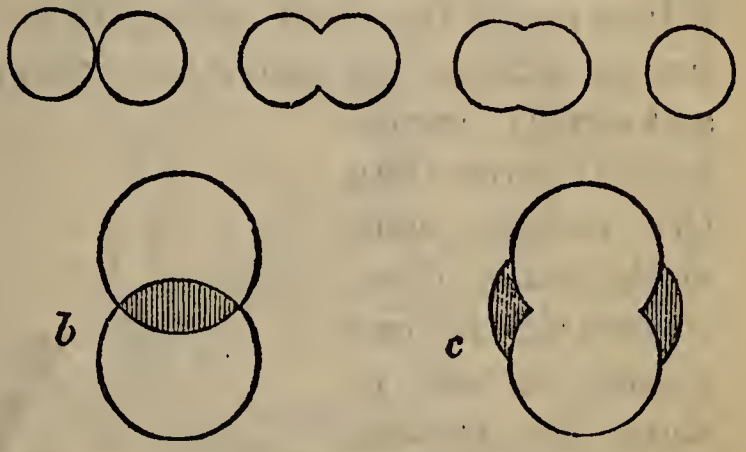


FIG. 39.

loss between them of as much wood as the shaded space. Therefore, half of that space must be added, or rather pushed out on each side, and the section of the uniting branch becomes approximately as in *c*, Fig. 39; the wood squeezed out encompassing the stem more as the circles close, until the whole is reconciled into one larger single circle.

§ 9. I fear the reader would have no patience with me, if I asked him to examine, in longitudinal section, the lines of the descending currents of wood as they eddy into the increased single river. Of course, it is just what would take place if two strong streams, filling each a cylindrical pipe, ran together into one larger cylinder, with a central rod passing up every tube. But, as this

central rod increases, and, at the same time, the supply of the stream from above, every added leaf contributing its little current, the eddies of wood about the fork become intensely curious and interesting; of which thus much the reader may observe in a moment by gathering a branch of any tree (laburnum shows it better, I think, than most), that the two meeting currents, first wrinkling a little, then rise in a low wave in the hollow of the fork, and flow over at the side, making their way to diffuse themselves round the stem, as in Fig. 40. Seen laterally, the bough bulges out below the fork, rather curiously and awkwardly, especially if more than two boughs meet at the same place, growing in one plane, so as to show the sudden increase on the profile. If the reader is interested in the subject, he will find strangely complicated and wonderful arrangements of stream when smaller boughs meet larger (one example is given in Plate 3, Vol. III., where the current of a smaller bough, entering upwards, pushes its way into the stronger rivers of the stem). But I cannot, of course, enter into such detail here.

Fig. 40.

Fig. 41.

§ 10. The little ringed accumulation, repelled from the wood of the larger trunk at the base of small boughs, may be seen at a glance in any tree, and needs no illustration; but I give one from Salvator, Fig. 41 (from his own etching, *Democritus omnium Derisor*), which is interesting, because it shows the swelling at the bases of insertion, which yet, Salvator's eye not being quick enough to detect the law of descent in the fibres, he, with his

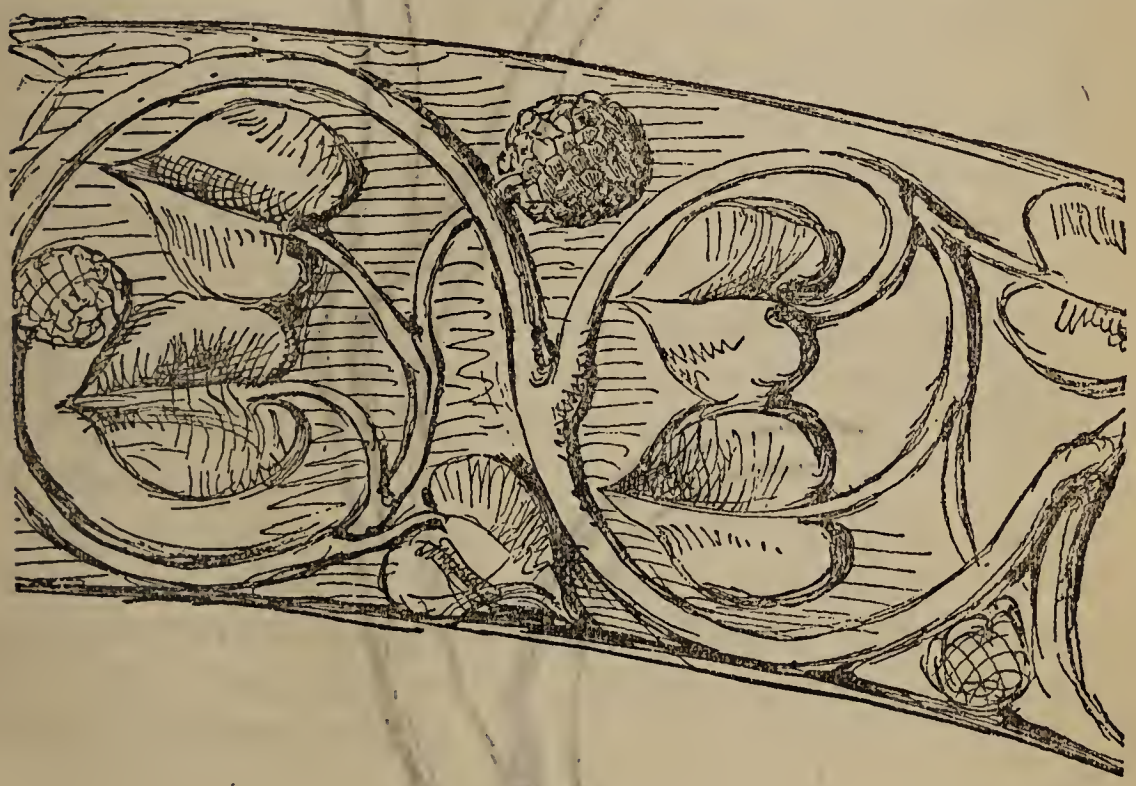


Fig. 42.

usual love of ugliness, fastens on this swollen character, and exaggerates it into an appearance of disease. The same bloated aspect may be seen in the example already given from another etching, Vol. III., Plate 4, Fig. 8.

§ 11. I do not give any more examples from Claude. We have had enough already in Plate 4, Vol. III., which the reader should examine carefully. If he will then look forward to Fig. 61 here, he will see how Turner inserts branches, and with what certain and strange instinct of fidelity he marks the wrinkled enlargement

and sinuous eddies of the wood rivers where they meet.

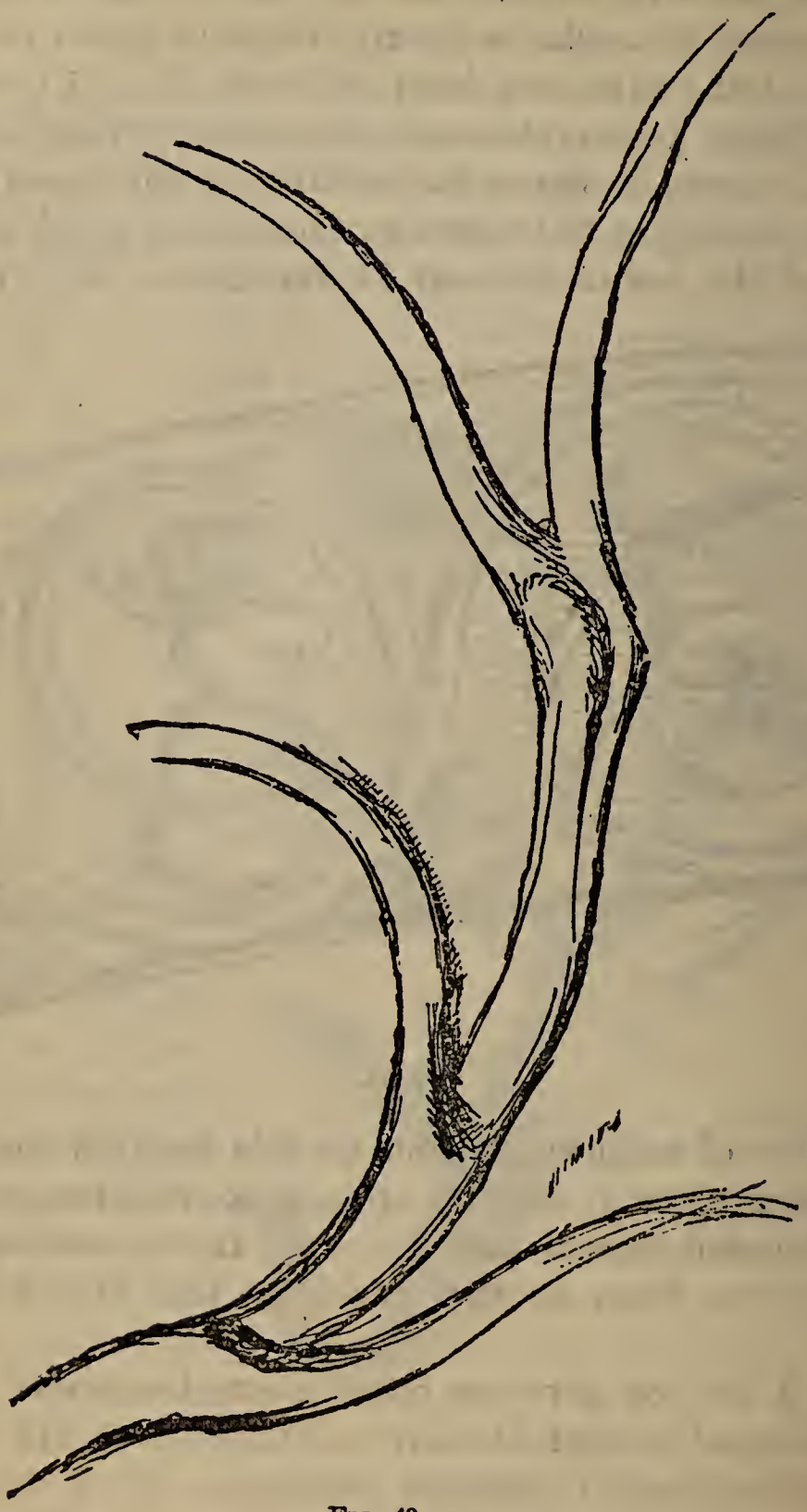


Fig. 43.

And remember always that Turner's greatness and rightness in all these points successively depend on no

scientific knowledge. He was entirely ignorant of all the laws we have been developing. He had merely accustomed himself to see impartially, intensely, and fearlessly.

§ 12. It may, perhaps, be interesting to compare, with the rude fallacies of Claude and Salvator, a little piece of earliest art, wrought by men who could see and feel. The scroll, Fig. 42, is a portion of that which surrounds the arch in San Zeno of Verona, above the pillar engraved in the *Stones of Venice*, Plate 17, Vol. I. It is, therefore, twelfth, or earliest thirteenth century work. Yet the foliage is already full of spring and life; and in the part of the stem, which I have given of its real size in Fig. 43, the reader will perhaps be surprised to see at the junctions the laws of vegetation, which escaped the sight of all the degenerate landscape-painters of Italy, expressed by one of her simple architectural workmen six hundred years ago.

We now know enough, I think, of the internal conditions which regulate tree-structure to enable us to investigate finally, the great laws of branch and stem aspect. But they are very beautiful; and we will give them a separate chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

THE STEM.

§ 1. We must be content, in this most complex subject, to advance very slowly: and our easiest, if not our only way, will be to examine, first, the conditions under which boughs would form, supposing them all to divide in one plane, as your hand divides when you lay it flat on the table, with the fingers as wide apart as you can. And then we will deduce the laws of ramification which follow on the real structure of branches, which truly divide, not in one plane, but as your fingers separate if you hold a large round ball with them.

The reader has, I hope, a clear idea by this time of the main principle of tree-growth; namely, that the increase is by addition, or superimposition, not extension. A branch does not stretch itself out as a leech stretches its body. But it receives additions at its extremity, and proportional additions to its thickness. For although the actual living shoot, or growing point, of any year, lengthens itself gradually until it reaches its terminal bud, after that bud is formed, its length is fixed. It is thenceforth one joint of the tree, like the joint of a pillar, on which other joints of marble may be laid to elongate the pillar, but which will not itself stretch. A tree is thus truly edified, or built, like a house.

§ 2. I am not sure with what absolute stringency this law is observed, or what slight lengthening of substance may be traceable by close measurement among inferior branches. For practical purposes, we may assume that

the law is final, and that if we represent the state of a plant, or extremity of branch, in any given year under the simplest possible type, Fig. 44, *a*, of two shoots, with terminal buds, springing from one stem, its growth next year may be expressed by the type, Fig. 44, *b*, in which, the original stems not changing or increasing, the terminal buds have built up each another story of plant, or repetition of the original form; and, in order to support this new edifice, have sent down roots all the way to the ground, so as to enclose and thicken the inferior stem.

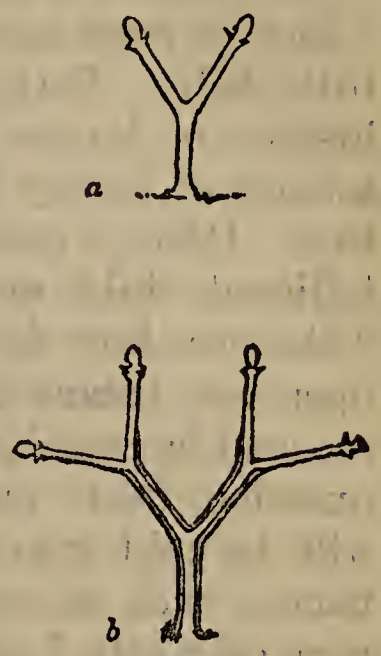


FIG. 44.

But if this is so, how does the original stem, which never lengthens, ever become the tall trunk of a tree? The arrangement thus stated provides very satisfactorily for making it stout, but not for making it tall. If the ramification proceeds in this way, the tree must assuredly become a round compact ball of short sticks, attached to the ground by a very stout, almost invisible, stem, like a puff-ball.

For if we take the form above, on a small scale, merely

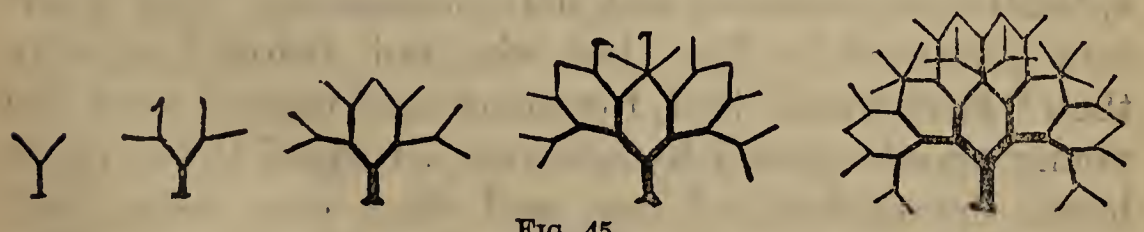


FIG. 45.

to see what comes of it, and carry its branching three steps farther, we get the successive conditions in Fig. 45, of which the last comes already round to the ground.

"But those forms really look something like trees!" Yes, if they were on a large scale. But each of the little shoots is only six or seven inches long; the whole

cluster would but be three or four feet over, and touches the ground already at its extremity. It would enlarge if it went on growing, but never rise from the ground.

§ 3. This is an interesting question: one, also, which, I fear, we must solve, so far as yet it can be solved, with little help. Perhaps nothing is more curious in the history of human mind than the way in which the science of botany has become oppressed by nomenclature. Here is perhaps the first question which an intelligent child would think of asking about a tree: "Mamma, how does it make its trunk?" and you may open one botanical work after another, and good ones too, and by sensible men—you shall not find this child's question fairly put, much less fairly answered. You will be told gravely that a stem has received many names, such as *culmus*, *stipes*, and *truncus;* that twigs were once called *flagella*, but are now called *ramuli;* and that Mr. Link calls a straight stem, with branches on its sides, a *caulis excurrens;* and a stem, which at a certain distance above the earth breaks out into irregular ramification, a *caulis deliquescens*. All thanks and honor be to Mr. Link! But at this moment, when we want to know *why* one stem breaks out "at a certain distance," and the other not at all, we find no great help in those splendid excurrencies and deliquescencies. "At a certain distance?" Yes: but why not before? or why then? How was it that, for many and many a year, the young shoots agreed to construct a vertical tower, or, at least, the nucleus of one, and then, one merry day, changed their minds, and built about their metropolis in all directions, nobody knows where, far into the air in free delight? How is it that yonder larch-stem grows straight and true, while all its branches, constructed by the same process as the mother trunk, and under the mother trunk's careful inspection and direction, nevertheless have lost all their manners, and go

forking and flashing about, more like cracklings of spitefullest lightning than decent branches of trees that dip green leaves in dew?

§ 4. We have probably, many of us, missed the point of such questions as these, because we too readily associated the structure of trees with that of flowers. The flowering part of a plant shoots out or up, in some given direction, until, at a stated period, it opens or branches into perfect form by a law just as fixed, and just as inexplicable, as that which numbers the joints of an animal's skeleton, and puts the head on its right joint. In many forms of flowers—fox-glove, aloe, hemlock, or blossom of maize—the structure of the flowering part so far assimilates itself to that of a tree, that we not unnaturally think of a tree only as a large flower, or large remnant of flower, run to seed. And we suppose the time and place of its branching to be just as organically determined as the height of the stalk of straw, or hemlock pipe, and the fashion of its branching just as fixed as the shape of petals in a pansy or cowslip.

§ 5. But that is not so; not so in anywise. So far as you can watch a tree, it is produced throughout by repetitions of the same process, which repetitions, however, are arbitrarily directed so as to produce one effect at one time, and another at another time. A young sapling has his branches as much as the tall tree. He does not shoot up in a long thin rod, and begin to branch when he is ten or fifteen feet high, as the hemlock or foxglove does when each has reached its ten or fifteen inches. The young sapling conducts himself with all the dignity of a tree from the first;—only he so manages his branches as to form a support for his future life, in a strong straight trunk, that will hold him well off the ground. Prudent little sapling!—but how does he manage this? how keep the young branches from rambling about, till the proper time, or on what plea dismiss

them from his service if they will not help his provident purpose? So again, there is no difference in mode of construction between the trunk of a pine and its branch. But external circumstances so far interfere with the results of this repeated construction, that a stone pine rises for a hundred feet like a pillar, and then suddenly bursts into a cloud. It is the knowledge of the mode in which such change may take place which forms the true natural history of trees:—or, more accurately, their moral history. An animal is born with so many limbs, and a head of such a shape. That is, strictly speaking, not its history, but one fact of its history: a fact of which no other account can be given than that it was so appointed. But a tree is born without a head. It has got to make its own head. It is born like a little family from which a great nation is to spring; and at a certain time, under peculiar external circumstances, this nation, every individual of which remains the same in nature and temper, yet gives itself a new political constitution, and sends out branch colonies, which enforce forms of law and life entirely different from those of the parent state. That is the history of the state. It is also the history of a tree.

§ 6. Of these hidden histories, I know and can tell you as little as I did of the making of rocks. It will be enough for me if I can put the difficulty fairly before you, show you clearly such facts as are necessary to the understanding of great Art, and so leave you to pursue, at your pleasure, the graceful mystery of this imperfect leafage life.

I took in the outset the type of a *triple* but as the most general that could be given of all trees, because it represents a prevalently upright main tendency, with a capacity of branching on both sides. I would have shown the power of branching on *all* sides if I could; but we must be content at first with the simplest condition.

From what we have seen since of bud structure, we may now make our type more complete by giving each bud a root proportioned to its size. And our elementary type of tree plant will be as in Fig. 46.

Fig. 46.

§ 7. Now, these three buds, though differently placed, have all one mind. No bud has an oblique mind. Every one would like, if he could, to grow upright, and it is because the midmost one has entirely his own way in this matter, that he is largest. He is an elder brother;—his birthright is to grow straight towards the sky. A younger child may perhaps supplant him, if he does not care for his privilege. In the meantime all are of one family, and love each other,—so that the two lateral buds do not stoop aside because they like it, but to let their more favored brother grow in peace. All the three buds and roots have at heart the same desire;—which is, the one to grow as straight as he can towards bright heaven, the other as deep as he can into dark earth. Up to light, and down to shade;—into air and into rock:—that is their mind and purpose forever. So far as they can, in kindness to each other, and by sufferance of external circumstances, work out that destiny, they will. But their beauty will not result from their working it out,—only from their maintained purpose and resolve to do so, if it may be. They will fail—certainly two, perhaps all three of them: fail egregiously;—ridiculously;—it may be agonizingly. Instead of growing up, they may be wholly sacrificed to happier buds above, and have to grow *down*, sideways, roundabout ways, all sorts of ways. Instead of getting down quietly into the convent of the earth, they may have to cling and crawl about hardest and hottest angles of it, full in sight of man and beast, and roughly trodden under foot by them;—stumbling-blocks to many.

Yet out of such sacrifice, gracefully made—such mis-

fortune, gloriously sustained—all their true beauty is to arise. Yes, and from more than sacrifice—more than misfortune: from *death*. Yes, and more than death:—from the worst kind of death: not natural, coming to each in its due time; but premature, oppressed, unnatural, misguided—or so it would seem—to the poor dying sprays. Yet, without such death, no strong trunk were ever possible; no grace of glorious limb or glittering leaf; no companionship with the rest of nature or with man.

FIG. 47.

§ 8. Let us see how this must be. We return to our poor little threefold type, Fig. 46, above. Next year he will become as in Fig. 47. The two lateral buds keeping as much as may be out of their brother's way, and yet growing upwards with a will, strike diagonal lines, and in moderate comfort accomplish their year's life and terminal buds. But what is to be done next? Forming the triple terminal head on this diagonal line, we find that one of our next year's buds, *c*, will have to grow down again, which is very hard; and another, *b*, will run right against the lateral branch of the upper bud, A, which must not be allowed under any circumstances.

What are we to do?

§ 9. The best we can. Give up our straightness, and some of our length, and consent to grow short and crooked. But *b* shall be ordered to stoop forward and keep his head out of the great bough's way, as in Fig. 48, and grow as he best may, with the consumptive pain in his chest. To give him a little more room, the elder brother,

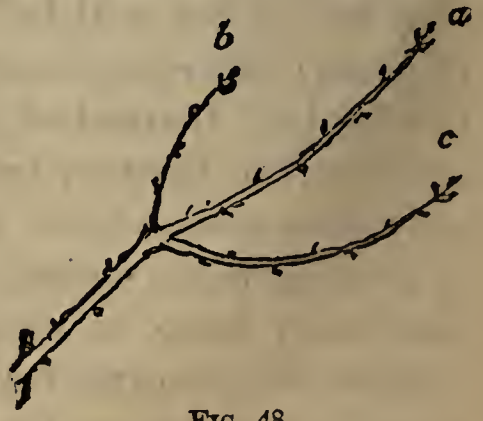


FIG. 48.

a, shall stoop a little forward also, recovering himself when he has got out of *b*'s way; and bud *c* shall be encouraged to bend himself bravely round and up, after his first start in that disagreeable downward direction. Poor *b*, withdrawn from air and light between *a* and A, and having to live stooping besides, cannot make much of himself, and is stunted and feeble. *c*, having free play for his energies, bends up with a will, and becomes handsomer, to our minds, than if he had been straight; and *a* is none the worse for his concession to unhappy *b* in early life.

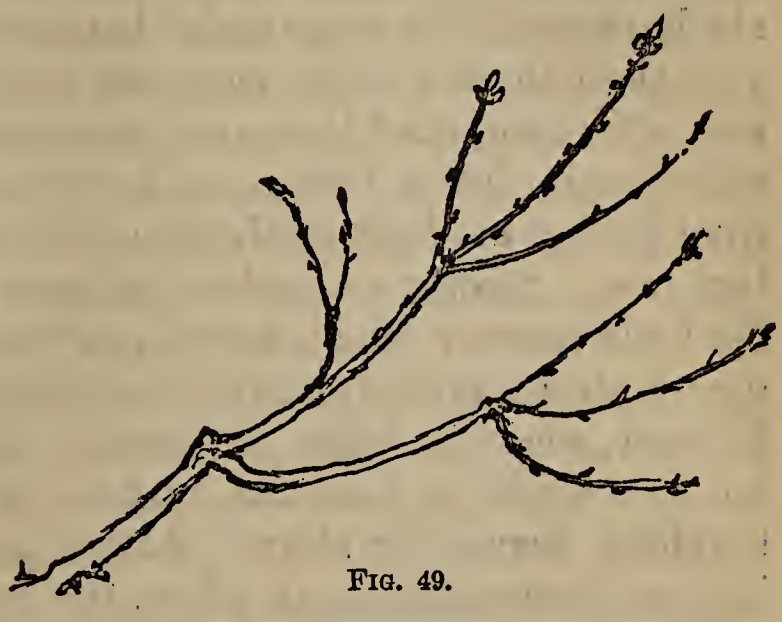


FIG. 49.

So far well for this year. But how for next? *b* is already too near the spray above him, even for his own strength and comfort; much less, with his weak constitution, will he be able to throw up any strong new shoots. And if he did, they would only run into those of the bough above. (If the reader will proceed in the construction of the whole figure he will see that this is so.) Under these discouragements and deficiencies, *b* is probably frostbitten, and drops off. The bough proceeds, mutilated, and itself somewhat discouraged. But it repeats its sincere and good-natured compliances, and at the close of the year, new wood from all the leaves having concealed the stump, and effaced the memory of poor lost *b*, and perhaps a consolatory bud lower down having thrown out a tiny spray to make the most of the vacant space near the main stem, we shall find the bough in some such shape as Fig. 49.

§ 10. Wherein we already see the germ of our irregularly bending branch, which might ultimately be much the prettier for the loss of *b*. Alas! the Fates have forbidden even this. While the low bough is making all these exertions, the boughs of A, above him, higher in air, have made the same under happier auspices. Every year their thicker leaves more and more forbid the light; and, after rain, shed their own drops unwittingly on the unfortunate lower bough, and prevent the air or sun from drying his bark or checking the chill in his medullary rays. Slowly a hopeless languor gains upon him. He buds here or there, faintly, in the spring; but the flow of strong wood from above oppresses him even about his root, where it joins the trunk. The very sap does not turn aside to him, but rushes up to the stronger, laughing leaves far above. Life is no more worth having; and abandoning all effort, the poor bough drops, and finds consummation of destiny in helping an old woman's fire.

When he is gone, the one next above is left with greater freedom, and will shoot now from points of its sprays which were before likely to perish. Hence another condition of irregularity in form. But that bough also will fall in its turn, though after longer persistence. Gradually thus the central trunk is built, and the branches by whose help it was formed cast off, leaving here and there scars, which are all effaced by years, or lost sight of among the roughnesses and furrows of the aged surface. The work is continually advancing, and thus the head of foliage on any tree is not an expansion at a given height, like a flower-bell, but the collective group of boughs, or workmen, who have got up so far, and will get up higher next year, still losing one or two of their number underneath.

§ 11. So far well. But this only accounts for the formation of a vertical trunk. How is it that at a certain

height this vertical trunk ceases to be built; and irregular branches spread in all directions?

First: In a great number of trees, the vertical trunk never ceases to be built. It is confused, at the top of the tree, among other radiating branches, being at first, of course, just as slender as they, and only prevailing over them in time. It shows at the top the same degree of irregularity and undulation as a sapling; and is transformed gradually into straightness lower down (see Fig. 50). The reader has only to take an hour's ramble, to see for himself how many trees are thus constructed, if circumstances are favorable to their growth. Again, the mystery of blossoming has great influence in increasing the tendency to dispersion among the upper boughs: but this part of vegetative structure I cannot enter into; it is too subtle, and has, besides, no absolute bearing on our subject; the principal conditions which produce the varied play of branches being purely mechanical. The point at which they show a determined tendency to spread is generally to be conceived as a place of *rest* for the tree, where it has reached the height from the ground at which ground-mist, imperfect circulation of air, &c., have ceased to operate injuriously on it, and where it has free room, and air, and light for its growth.

§ 12. I find there is quite an infinite interest in watching the different ways in which trees part their sprays at this resting-place, and the sometimes abrupt, sometimes gentle and undiscoverable, severing of the upright stem into the wandering and wilful branches; but a volume, instead of a chapter or two, and quite a little gallery of plates, would be needed to illustrate the various grace of this division, associated as it is with an exquisitely subtle effacing of undulation in the thicker stems, by the flowing down of the wood from above; the curves which are too violent in the branches being

filled up, so that what was at *a*, Fig. 50, becomes as at *b*, and when the main stem is old, passes at last into straightness by almost imperceptible curves, a continually gradated emphasis of curvature being carried to the branch extremities.

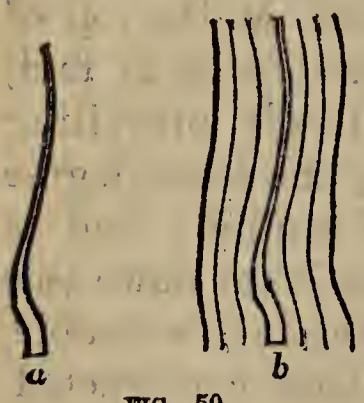


FIG. 50.

§ 13. Hitherto we have confined ourselves entirely to examination of stems in one plane. We must glance —though only to ascertain how impossible it is to do more than glance —at the conditions of form which result from the throwing out of branches, not in one plane, but on all sides. "As your fingers divide when they hold a ball," I said; or, better, a large cup without a handle. Consider how such ramification will appear in one of the bud groups, that of our old friend the oak. We saw it opened usually into five shoots. Imagine, then (Fig. 51), a five-sided cup or funnel with a stout rod running through the centre of it. In the figure it is seen from above, so as partly to show the inside, and a little obliquely, that the central rod may not hide any of the angles. Then let us suppose that, where the angles of this cup were, we have, instead, five rods, as in Fig. 52, A, like the ribs of a pentagonal umbrella turned inside out by the wind. I dot the pentagon which connects their extremities, to keep their positions clear. Then these five rods, with the central one, will represent the five shoots, and the leader, from a vigorous young oak-spray. Put the leaves on each; the five-

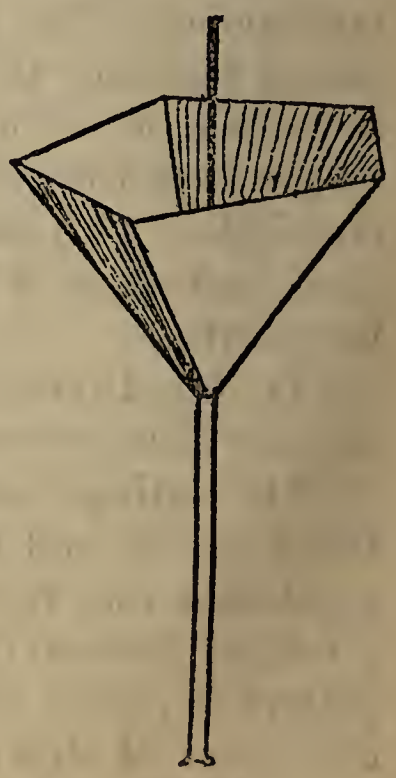


FIG. 51.

foiled star at its extremity, and the others, now not quite formally, but still on the whole as in Fig. 3 above, and we have the result, Fig. 52, B—rather a pretty one.

§ 14. By considering the various aspects which the five rods would take in Fig. 52, as the entire group was seen from below or above, and at different angles and distances, the reader may find out for himself what

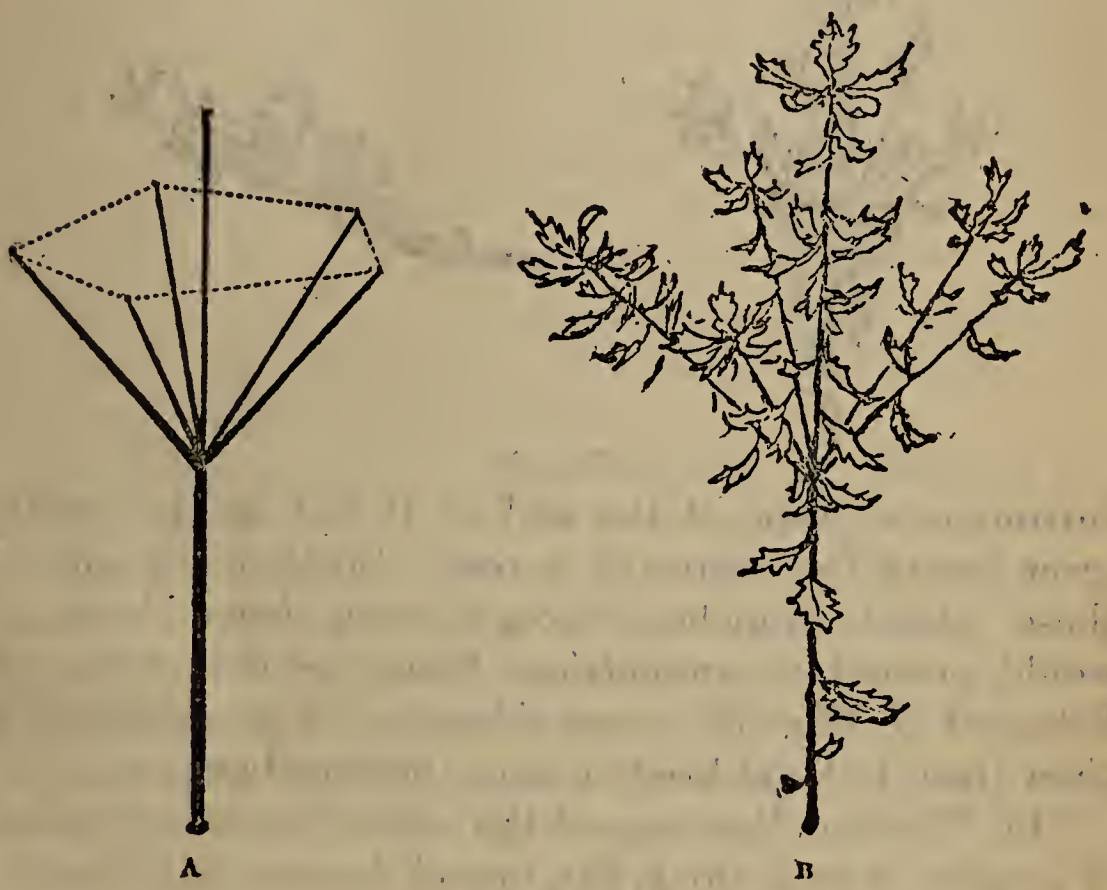


FIG. 52.

changes of aspect are possible in even so regular a structure as this. But the branchings soon take more complex symmetry. We know that next year each of these five subordinate rods is to enter into life on its own account, and to repeat the branching of the first. Thus, we shall have five pentagonal cups surrounding a large central pentagonal cup. This figure, if the reader likes a pretty perspective problem, he may construct for his own pleasure:—which having done, or conceived, he is then to apply the great principles of subjection

and resilience, not to three branches only, as in Fig. 49, but to the five of each cup;—by which the cups get flattened out and bent up, as you may have seen vessels of Venetian glass, so that every cup actually takes something the shape of a thick aloe or artichoke leaf; and they surround the central one, not as a bunch of grapes

FIG. 53.

surrounds a grape at the end of it, but as the petals grow round the centre of a rose. So that any one of these lateral branches—though, seen from above, it would present a symmetrical figure, as if it were not flattened (A, Fig. 53)—seen sideways, or in profile, will show itself to be at least as much flattened as at B.

§ 15. You may thus regard the whole tree as composed of a series of such thick, flat, branch-leaves; only incomparably more varied and enriched in framework as they spread; and arranged more or less in spirals round the trunk. Gather a cone of a Scotch fir; begin at the bottom of it, and pull off the seeds, so as to show one of the spiral rows of them continuously, from the bottom to the top, leaving enough seeds above them to support the row. Then the gradual lengthening of the seeds from the root, their spiral arrangement, and their limitation within a curved, convex form, furnish the best *severe* type you can have of the branch system of all stemmed trees; and each seed of the cone represents,

not badly, the sort of flattened solid leaf-shape which all complete branches have. Also, if you will try to draw the spiral of the fir-cone, you will understand something about tree-perspective, which may be generally useful. Finally, if you note the way in which the seeds of the cone slip each farther and farther over each other, so as to change sides in the middle of the cone, and obtain a reversed action of spiral lines in the upper half, you may imagine what a piece of work it would be for both of us, if we were to try to follow the complexities of branch order in trees of irregular growth, such as the rhododendron. I tried to do it, at least, for the pine, in section, but saw I was getting into a perfect maelström of spirals, from which no efforts would have freed me, in any imaginable time, and the only safe way was to keep wholly out of the stream.

§ 16. The alternate system, leading especially to the formation of forked trees, is more manageable; and if the reader is master of perspective he may proceed some distance in the examination of that for himself. But I do not care to frighten the general reader by many diagrams; the book is always sure to open at them when he takes it up. I will venture on one which has perhaps something a little amusing about it, and is really of importance.

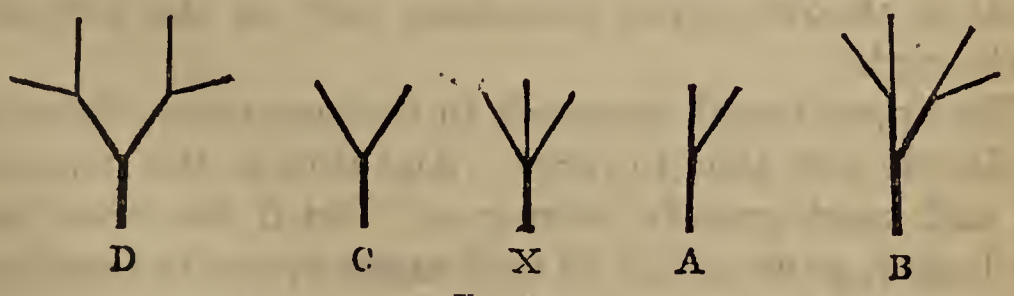


FIG. 54.

§ 17. Let X, Fig. 54, represent a shoot of any opposite-leaved tree. The mode in which it will grow into a tree depends, mainly, on its disposition to lose the leader or a lateral shoot. If it keeps the leader, but drops the

lateral, it takes the form A, and next year, by a repetition of the process, B.

But if it keeps the laterals, and drops the leader, it becomes first, C, and next year, D. The form A is almost universal in spiral or alternate trees; and it is especially to be noted as bringing about this result, that in any given forking, one bough always goes on in its own direct course, and the other leaves it softly; they do not separate as if one was repelled from the other. Thus in Fig. 55, a perfect and nearly symmetrical piece of ramification, by Turner (lowest bough but one in the tree on the left in the "Château of la belle Gabrielle"), the

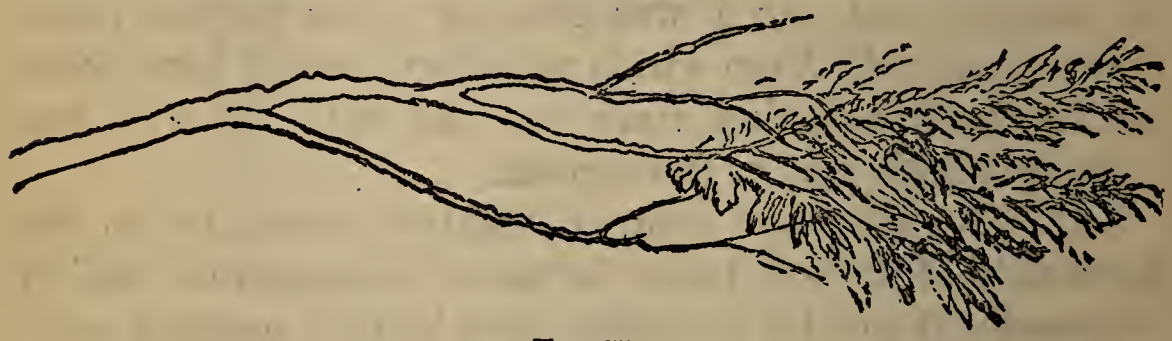


FIG. 55.

leading bough, going on in its own curve, throws off, first, a bough to the right, then one to the left, then two small ones to the right, and proceeds itself, hidden by leaves, to form the farthest upper point of the branch.

The lower secondary bough—the first thrown off—proceeds in its own curve, branching first to the left, then to the right.

The upper bough proceeds in the same way, throwing off first to left, then to right. And this is the commonest and most graceful structure. But if the tree loses the leader, as at C, Fig. 54 (and many opposite trees have a trick of doing so), a very curious result is arrived at, which I will give in a geometrical form.

§ 18. The number of branches which die, so as to leave the main stem bare, is always greatest low down, or near the interior of the tree. It follows that the lengths of

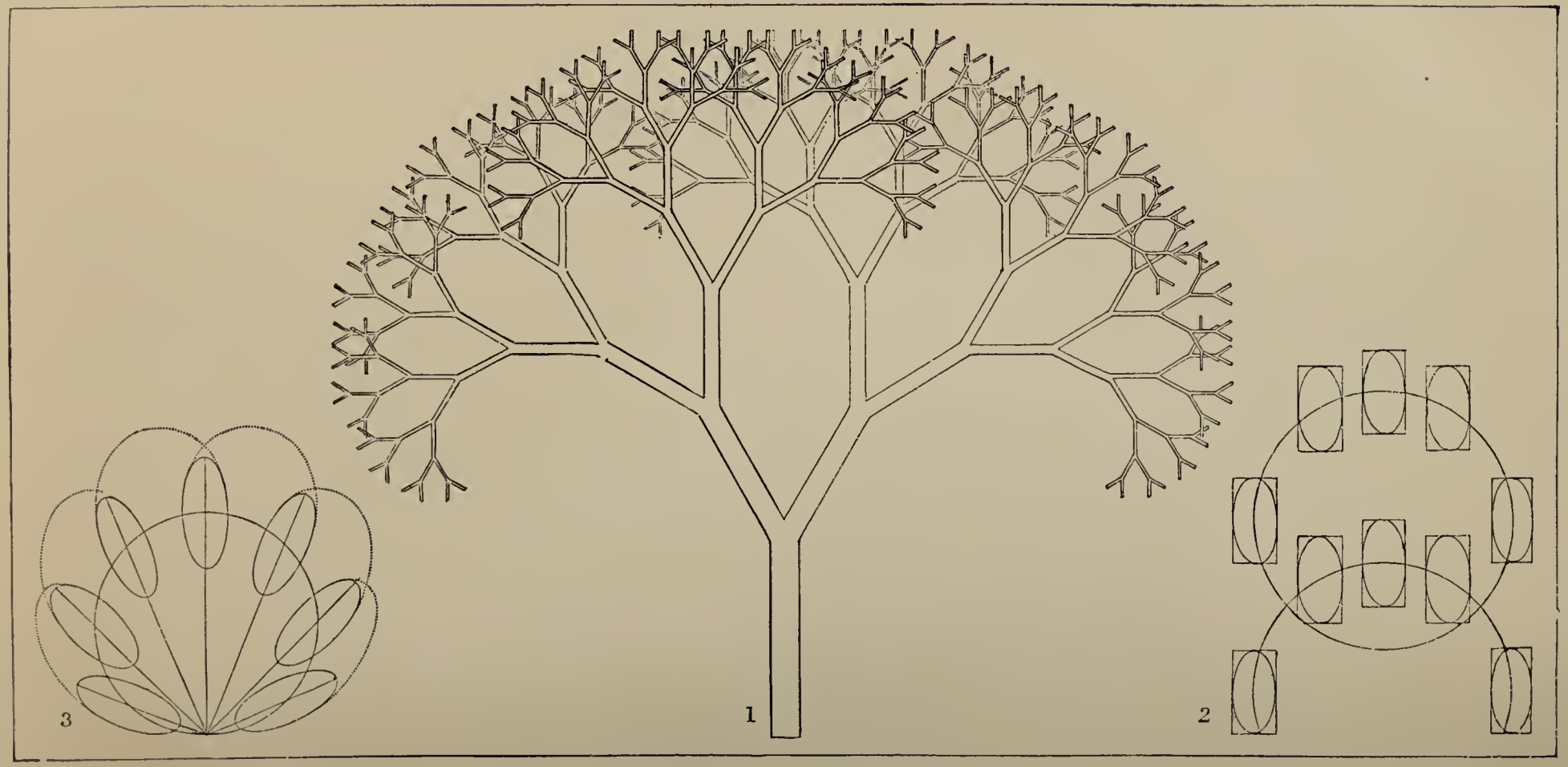


PLATE LVII.—SKETCH BY A CLERK OF THE WORKS.

stem which do not fork diminish gradually to the extremities, in a fixed proportion. This is a general law. Assume, for example's sake, the stem to separate always into two branches, at an equal angle, and that each branch is three-quarters of the length of the preceding one. Diminish their thickness in proportion, and carry out the figure any extent you like. In Plate 57, opposite, Fig. 1, you have it at its ninth branch; in which I wish you to notice, first, the delicate curve formed by every complete line of the branches (compare Vol. IV., Fig. 91); and, secondly, the very curious result of the top of the tree being a broad flat line, which passes at an angle into lateral shorter lines, and so down to the extremities. It is this property which renders the contours of tops of trees so intensely difficult to draw rightly, without making their curves too smooth and insipid.

Observe, also, that the great weight of the foliage being thrown on the outside of each main fork, the tendency of forked trees is very often to droop and diminish the bough on one side, and erect the other into a principal mass.*

§ 19. But the form in a perfect tree is dependent on the revolution of this sectional profile, so as to produce a mushroom-shaped or cauliflower-shaped mass, of which I leave the reader to enjoy the perspective drawing by himself, adding, after he has completed it, the effect of the law of resilience to the extremities. Only, he must note this: that in real trees, as the branches rise from the ground, the open spaces underneath are partly filled

* This is Harding's favorite form of tree. You will find it much insisted on in his works on foliage. I intended to have given a figure to show the results of the pressure of the weight of all the leafage on a great lateral bough, in modifying its curves, the strength of timber being greatest where the leverage of the mass tells most. But I find nobody ever reads things which it takes any trouble to understand, so that it is of no use to write them.

by subsequent branchings, so that a real tree has not so much the shape of a mushroom, as of an apple, or, if elongated, a pear.

§ 20. And now you may just begin to understand a little of Turner's meaning in those odd pear-shaped trees of his, in the "Mercury and Argus," and other such compositions: which, however, before we can do completely, we must gather our evidence together, and see what general results will come of it respecting the hearts and fancies of trees, no less than their forms.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LEAF MONUMENTS.

§ 1. And now, having ascertained in its main points the system on which the leaf-workers build, let us see, finally, what results in aspect, and appeal to human mind, their building must present. In some sort it resembles that of the coral animal, differing, however, in two points. First, the animal which forms branched coral, builds, I believe, in calm water, and has few accidents of current, light, or heat to contend with. He builds in monotonous ramification, untormented, therefore unbeautiful. Secondly, each coral animal builds for himself, adding his cell to what has been before constructed, as a bee adds another cell to the comb. He obtains no essential connection with the root and foundation of the whole structure. That foundation is thickened clumsily, by a fused and encumbering aggregation, as a stalactite increases; —not by threads proceeding from the extremities to the root.

§ 2. The leaf, as we have seen, builds in both respects under opposite conditions. It leads a life of endurance, effort, and various success, issuing in various beauty; and it connects itself with the whole previous edifice by one sustaining thread, continuing its appointed piece of work all the way from top to root. Whence result three great conditions in branch aspect, for which I cannot find good names, but must use the imperfect ones of "Spring," "Caprice," "Fellowship."

§ 3. I. Spring: or the appearance of elastic and pro-

gressive power, as opposed to that look of a bent piece of cord.—This follows partly on the poise of the bough, partly on its action in seeking or shunning. Every branch-line expresses both these. It takes a curve accurately showing the relations between the strength of the sprays in that position (growing downward, upward, or laterally), and the weight of leaves they carry; and again, it takes a curve expressive of the will or aim of those sprays, during all their life, and handed down from sire to son, in steady inheritance of resolution to reach forward in a given direction, or bend away from some given evil influence.

And all these proportionate strengths and measured efforts of the bough produce its loveliness, and ought to be felt, in looking at it, not by any mathematical evidence, but by the same fine instinct which enables us to perceive, when a girl dances rightly, that she moves easily, and with delight to herself; that her limbs are strong enough, and her body tender enough, to move precisely as she wills them to move. You cannot say of any bend of arm or foot what precise relations of their curves to the whole figure manifest, in their changeful melodies, that ease of motion; yet you feel that they do so, and you feel it by a true instinct. And if you reason on the matter farther, you may know, though you cannot see, that an absolute mathematical necessity proportions every bend of the body to the rate and direction of its motion; and that the momentary fancy and fire of the will measure themselves, even in their gaily-fancied freedom, by stern laws of nervous life, and material attraction, which regulate eternally every pulse of the strength of man, and every sweep of the stars of heaven.

§ 4. Observe, also, the balance of the bough of a tree is quite as subtle as that of a figure in motion. It is a balance between the elasticity of the bough and the weight of leaves, affected in curvature, literally, by the

Fig. 56.

growth of *every* leaf; and besides this, when it moves, it is partly supported by the resistance of the air, greater or less, according to the shape of leaf;—so that branches float on the wind more than they yield to it; and in their tossing do not so much bend under a force, as rise on a wave, which penetrates in liquid threads through all their sprays.

§ 5. I am not sure how far, by any illustration, I can exemplify these subtle conditions of form. All my plans have been shortened, and I have learned to content myself with yet more contracted issues of them after the shortening, because I know that nearly all in such matters must be said or shown, unavailably. No saying will teach the truth. Nothing but doing. If the reader will draw boughs of trees long and faithfully, giving previous pains to gain the power (how rare!) of drawing *anything* faithfully, he will come to see what Turner's work is, or any other right work, but not by reading, nor thinking, nor idly looking. However, in some degree, even our ordinary instinctive perception of grace and balance may serve us, if we choose to pay any accurate attention to the matter.

§ 6. Look back to Fig. 55. That bough of Turner's is exactly and exquisitely poised, leaves and all, for its present horizontal position. Turn the book so as to put the spray upright, with the leaves at the top. You ought to see they would then be wrong;—that they must, in that position, have adjusted themselves more directly above the main stem, and more firmly, the curves of the lighter sprays being a deflection caused by their weight in the horizontal position. Again, Fig. 56 represents, enlarged to four times the size of the original, the two Scotch firs in Turner's etching of Inverary.* These are both in perfect poise, representing

* They are enlarged, partly in order to show the care and minuteness of Turner's drawing on the smallest scale, partly to save the

a double action: the warping of the trees away from the sea-wind, and the continual growing out of the boughs on the right-hand side, to recover the balance.

Turn the page so as to be horizontal, and you ought to feel that, considered now as branches, both would be out of balance. If you turn the heads of the trees to your right, they are wrong, because gravity would have bent them more downwards; if to your left, wrong, because the law of resilience would have raised them more at the extremities.

§ 7. Now take two branches of Salvator's, Figs. 57 and 58.* You ought to feel that these have neither poise nor spring: their leaves are incoherent, ragged, hanging together in decay.

Immediately after these, turn to Plate 58, opposite. The branch at the top is facsimiled from that in the hand of Adam, in Durer's Adam and Eve.† It is full of the most exquisite vitality and spring in every line. Look at it for five minutes carefully. Then turn back to Salvator's, Fig. 57. Are you as well satisfied with it? You ought to feel that it is not strong enough at the origin to sustain the leaves; and that if it were, those leaves themselves are in broken or forced relations with each other. Such relations might, indeed, exist in a partially withered tree, and one of these branches is intended to be partially withered, but the other is not; and if it were, Salvator's choice of the withered tree is precisely the sign of his preferring ugliness to beauty,

reader the trouble of using a magnifying glass, partly because this woodcut will print safely; while if I had facsimiled the fine Turner etching the block might have been spoiled after a hundred impressions.

* Magnified to twice the size of the original, but otherwise facsimiled from his own etching of Œdipus, and the School of Plato.

† The parrot perched on it is removed, which may be done without altering the curve, as the bird is set where its weight would not have bent the wood.

PLATE LVIII.—LEAFAGE BY DURER AND VERONESE.

decrepitude and disorganization to life and youth. The leaves on the spray, by Durer, hold themselves as

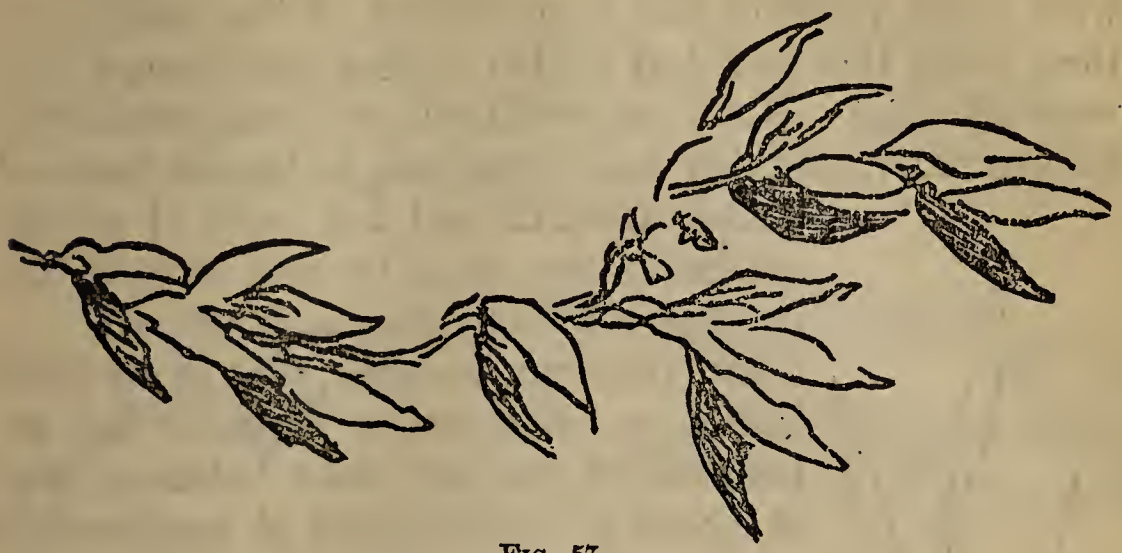


Fig. 57.

the girl holds herself in dancing; those on Salvator's as an old man, partially palsied, totters along with broken motion, and loose deflection of limb.

Fig. 58.

§ 8. Next, let us take a spray by Paul Veronese *— the lower figure in Plate 58. It is just as if we had

*The largest laurel spray in the background of the "Susanna," Louvre—reduced to about a fifth of the original. The drawing was made for me by M. Hippolyte Dubois, and I am glad it is not one of

gathered one out of the garden. Though every line and leaf in the quadruple group is necessary to join with other parts of the composition of the noble picture, every line and leaf is also as free and true as if it were growing. None are confused, yet none are loose; all are individual, yet none separate, in tender poise of pliant strength and fair order of accomplished grace, each, by due force of the indulgent bough, set and sustained.

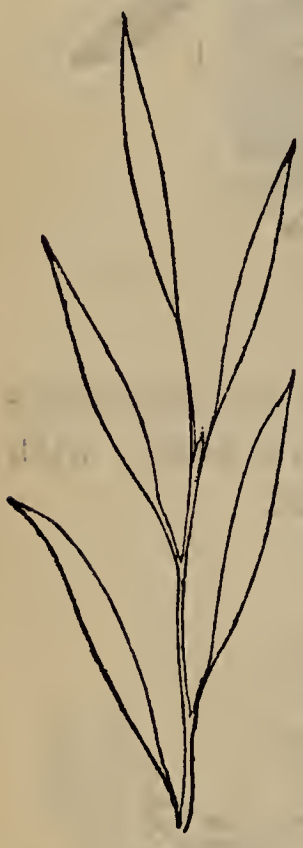


Fig. 59.

§ 9. Observe, however, that in all these instances from earlier masters, the expression of the universal botanical law of poise is independent of accuracy in rendering of species. As before noticed, the neglect of specific distinction long restrained the advance of landscape, and even hindered Turner himself in many respects. The sprays of Veronese are a conventional type of laurel; Albert Durer's an imaginary branch of paradisaical vegetation; Salvator's, a rude reminiscence of sweet chestnut; Turner's only is a faithful rendering of the Scotch fir.

§ 10. To show how the principle of balance is carried out by Nature herself, here is a little terminal upright spray of willow, the most graceful of English trees (Fig. 59). I have drawn it carefully; and if the reader will study its curves, or, better, trace

my own, lest I should be charged with exaggerating Veronese's accuracy.

This group of leaves is, in the original, of the life-size; the circle which interferes with the spray on the right being the outline of the head and of one of the elders; and, as painted for distant effect, there is no care in completing the stems:—they are struck with a few broken touches of the brush, which cannot be imitated in the engraving, and much of their spirit is lost in consequence

and pencil them with a perfectly fine point, he will feel, I think, without difficulty, their finished relation to the leaves they sustain. Then if we turn suddenly to a piece of Dutch branch-drawing (Fig. 60), facsimiled from No. 160, Dulwich Gallery (Berghem), he will understand, I believe, also the qualities of that, without comment of

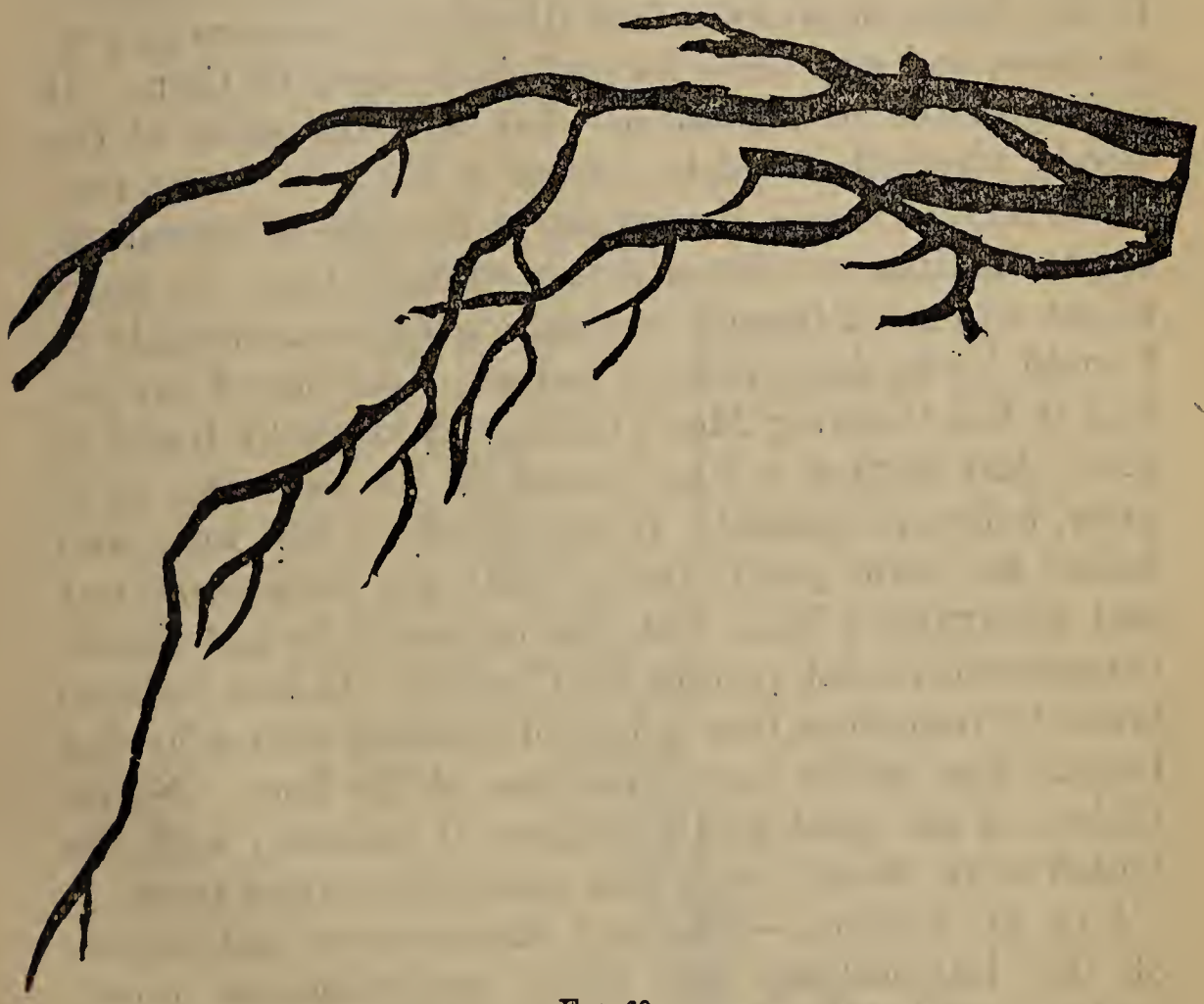


FIG. 60.

mine. It is of course not so dark in the original, being drawn with the chance dashes of a brush loaded with brown, but the contours are absolutely as in the wood-cut. This Dutch design is a very characteristic example of two faults in tree-drawing: namely, the loss not only of grace and spring, but of woodiness. A branch is not elastic as steel is, neither as a carter's whip is. It is a combination, wholly peculiar, of elasticity with half-dead and sapless stubbornness, and of

continuous curve with pauses of knottiness, every bough having its blunted, affronted, fatigued, or repentant moments of existence, and mingling crabbed rugosities and fretful changes of mind with the main tendencies of its growth. The piece of pollard willow opposite (Fig. 61), facsimiled from Turner's etching of "Young Anglers," in the Liber Studiorum, has all these characters in perfectness, and may serve for sufficient study of them. It is impossible to explain in what the expression of the woody strength consists, unless it be felt. One very obvious condition is the excessive fineness of curvature, approximating continually to a straight line. In order to get a piece of branch curvature given as accurately as I could by an unprejudiced person, I set one of my pupils at the Working Men's College (a joiner by trade) to draw, last spring, a lilac branch of its real size, as it grew, before it budded. It was about six feet long, and before he could get it quite right, the buds came out and interrupted him; but the fragment he got drawn is engraved in flat profile, in Plate 59. It has suffered much by reduction, one or two of its finest curves having become lost in the mere thickness of the lines. Nevertheless, if the reader will compare it carefully with the Dutch work, it will teach him something about trees.

§ 11. II. Caprice.—The next character we had to note of the leaf-builders was their capriciousness, noted, partly, in Vol. III., chap. ix., § 14. It is a character connected with the ruggedness and ill-temperedness just spoken of, and an essential source of branch beauty: being in reality the written story of all the branch's life, —of the theories it formed, the accidents it suffered, the fits of enthusiasm to which it yielded in certain delicious warm springs; the disgusts at weeks of east wind, the mortification of itself for its friends' sakes; or the sudden and successful inventions of new ways of getting out to the sun. The reader will understand this charac-

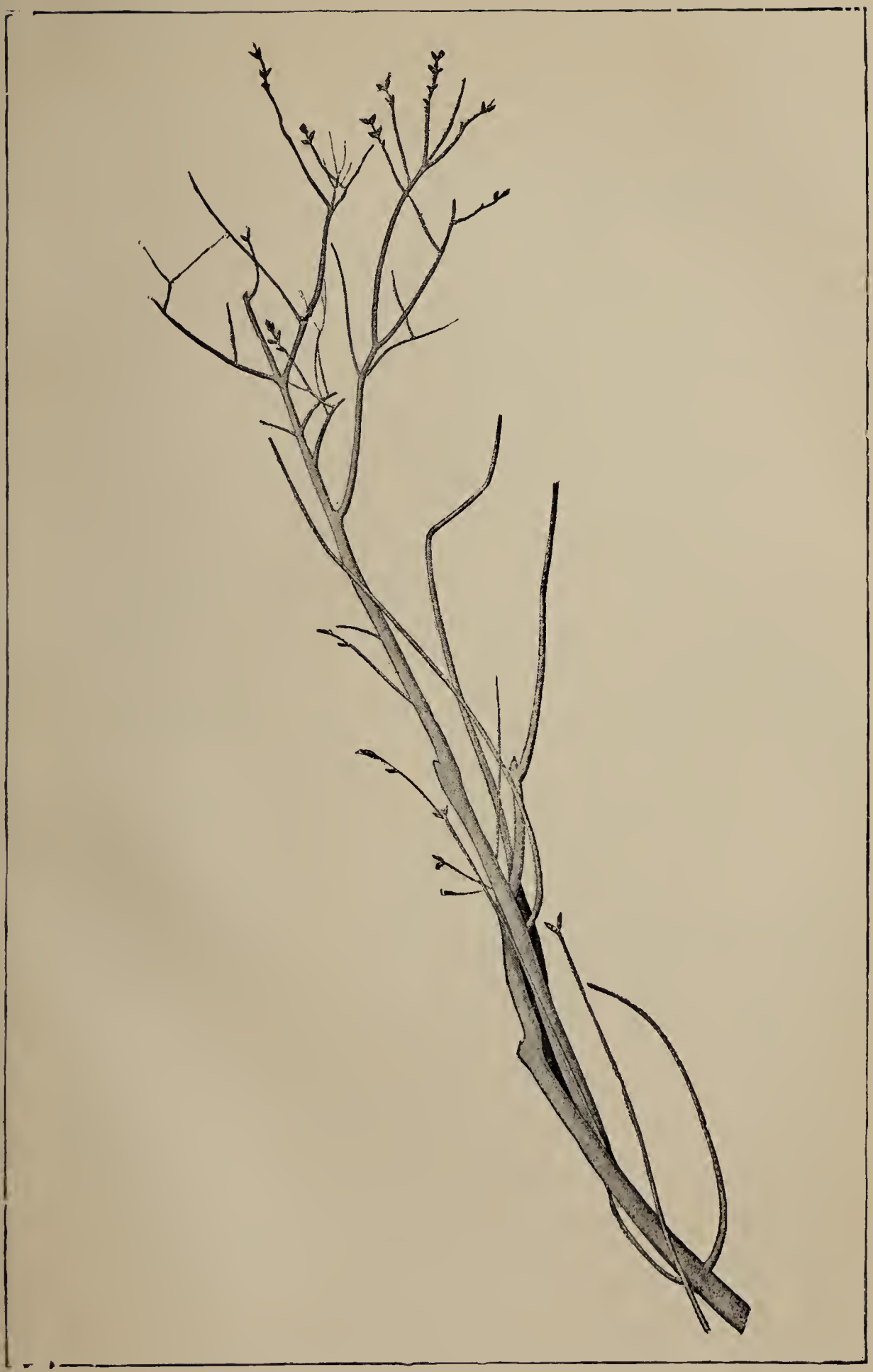


PLATE LIX.—BRANCH CURVATURE.

FIG. 61.

ter in a moment, by merely comparing Fig. 62, which is a branch of Salvator's,* with Fig. 63, which I have traced from the engraving, in the Yorkshire series, of Turner's "Aske Hall." You cannot but feel at once, not only the wrongness of Salvator's, but its dulness. It is not now a question either of poise, or grace, or gravity; only of wit. That bough has got no sense; it has not been

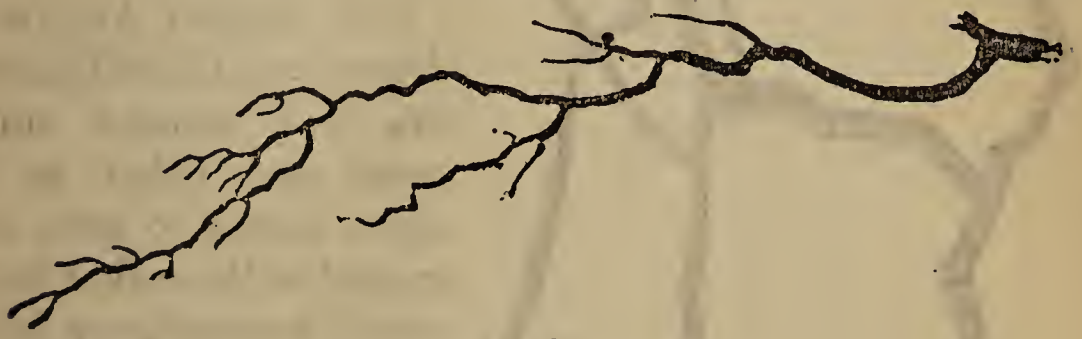


Fig. 62.

Fig. 63.

struck by a single new idea from the beginning of it to the end; dares not even cross itself with one of its own sprays. You will be amazed, in taking up any of these old engravings, to see how seldom the boughs *do* cross each other. Whereas, in nature, not only is the intersection of extremities a mathematical necessity (see Plate 57), but out of this intersection and crossing of

* The longest in "Apollo and the Sibyl," engraved by Boydell. (Reduced one-half.)

curve by curve, and the opposition of line it involves, the best part of their composition arises. Look at the way the boughs are interwoven in that piece of lilac stem (Plate 59).

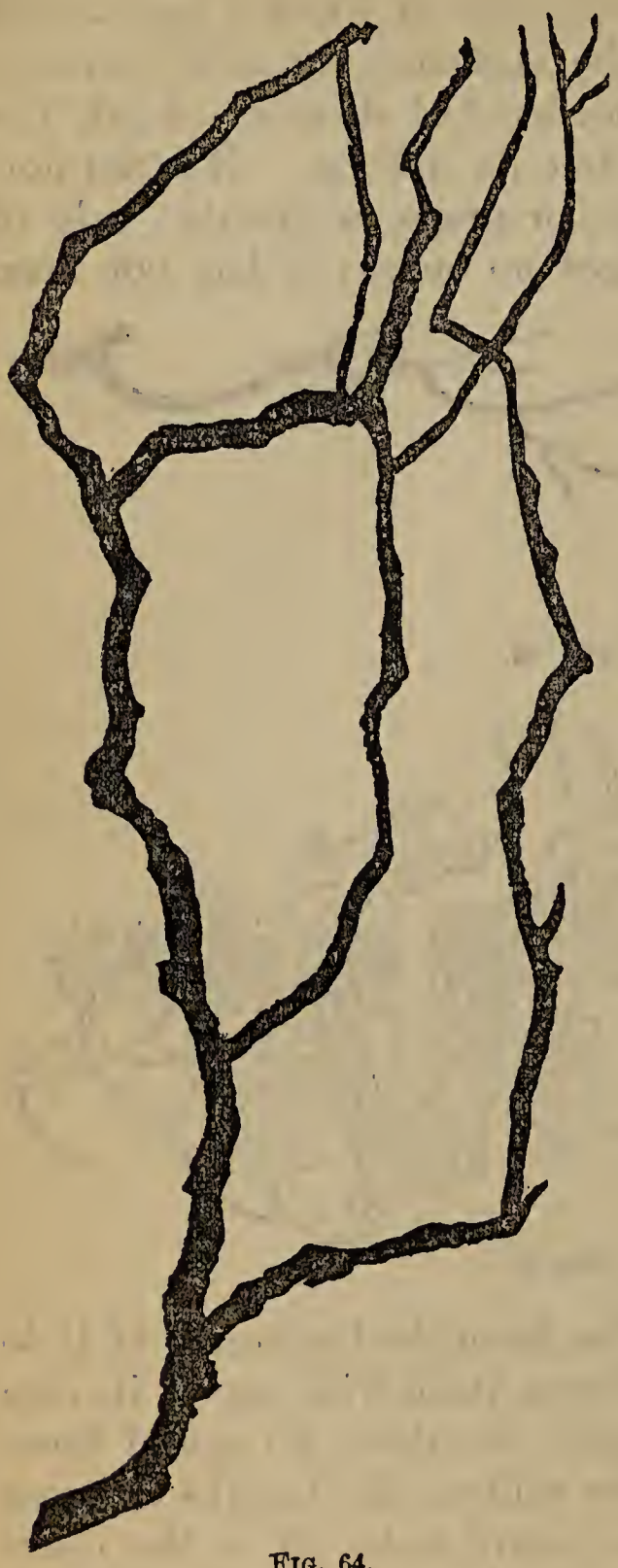


Fig. 64.

§ 12. Again: As it seldom struck the old painters that boughs must cross each other, so it never seems to have occurred to them that they must be sometimes foreshortened. I chose this bit from "Aske Hall," that you might see at once, both how Turner foreshortens the main stem, and how, in doing so, he shows the turning aside, and outwards, of the one next to it, to the left, to get more air.* Indeed, this foreshortening lies at the core of the business; for unless it be well understood, no branch-form can ever be rightly drawn. I placed the oak spray in Plate 52 so as to be seen as

* The foreshortening of the bough to the right is a piece of great audacity; it comes towards us two or three feet sharply, after forking, so as to look half as thick again as at the fork;—then bends back again, and outwards.

nearly straight on its flank as possible. It is the most uninteresting position in which a bough can be drawn; but it shows the first simple action of the law of resilience. I will now turn the bough with its extremity towards us, and foreshorten it (Plate 60), which being done, you perceive another tendency in the whole branch, not seen at all in the first Plate, to throw its sprays to its own right (or to your left), which it does to avoid the branch next it, while the *forward* action is in a sweeping curve round to your right, or to the branch's left: a curve which it takes to recover position after its first concession. The lines of the nearer and smaller shoots are very nearly—thus foreshortened—those of a boat's bow. Here is a piece of Dutch foreshortening for you to compare with it, Fig. 64.*

§ 13. In this final perfection of bough-drawing, Turner stands *wholly alone.* Even Titian does not foreshorten his boughs rightly. Of course he could, if he had cared to do so; for if you can foreshorten a limb or a hand, much more a tree branch. But either he had never looked at a tree carefully enough to feel that it was necessary, or, which is more likely, he disliked to introduce in a background elements of vigorous projection. Be the reason what it may, if you take Lefèvre's plates of the Peter Martyr and St. Jerome—the only ones I know which give any idea of Titian's tree-drawing—you will observe at once that the boughs lie in flakes, artificially set to the right and left, and are not intricate or varied, even where the foliage indicates some foreshortening;—completing thus the evidence for my statement long ago given, that no man but Turner had ever drawn the stem of a tree.

§ 14. It may be well also to note, for the advantage of the general student of design, that, in foliage and bough

* Hobbima. Dulwich Gallery, No. 131. Turn the book with its outer edge up.

drawing, all the final grace and general utility of the study depend on its being well foreshortened; and that, till the power of doing so quite accurately is obtained, no landscape-drawing is of the least value; nor can the

Fig. 65.

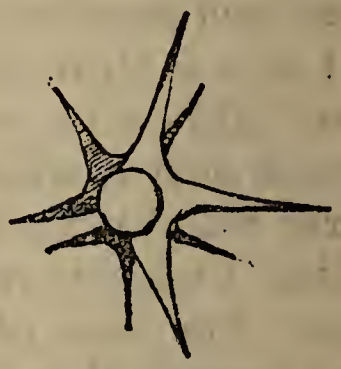


Fig. 66.

character of any tree be known at all until not only its branches, but its minutest extremities, have been drawn in the severest foreshortening, with little accompanying plans of the arrangements of the leaves or buds, or thorns, on the stem. Thus Fig. 65 is the extremity of a single shoot of spruce fir, foreshortened, showing the resilience of its swords from beneath, and Fig. 66 is a little ground-plan, showing the position of the three lowest triple groups of thorn on a shoot of gooseberry.* The fir shoot is carelessly drawn; but it is not worth while to do it better, unless I engraved it on steel, so as to show the fine relations of shade.

§ 15. III. Fellowship.—The compactness of mass presented by this little sheaf of pine-swords may lead us to the consideration of the last character I have to note of boughs; namely the mode of their association in masses.

* Their change from groups of three to groups of two, and then to single thorns at the end of the spray, will be found very beautiful in a real shoot. The figure on the left in Plate 53 is a branch of blackthorn with its spines (which are a peculiar condition of branch, and can bud like branches, while thorns have no root nor power of development). Such a branch gives good practice without too much difficulty.

It follows, of course, from all the laws of growth we have ascertained, that the terminal outline of any tree or branch must be a simple one, containing within it, at a given height or level, the series of leaves of the year; only we have not yet noticed the kind of form which results, in each branch, from the part it has to take in forming the mass of the tree. The systems of branching are indeed infinite, and could not be exemplified by any number of types; but here are two common types, in section, which will enough explain what I mean.

§ 16. If a tree branches with a concave tendency, it is apt to carry its boughs to the outer curve of limitation, as at A, Fig. 67, and if with a convex tendency, as at B. In either case the vertical section, or profile, of a bough

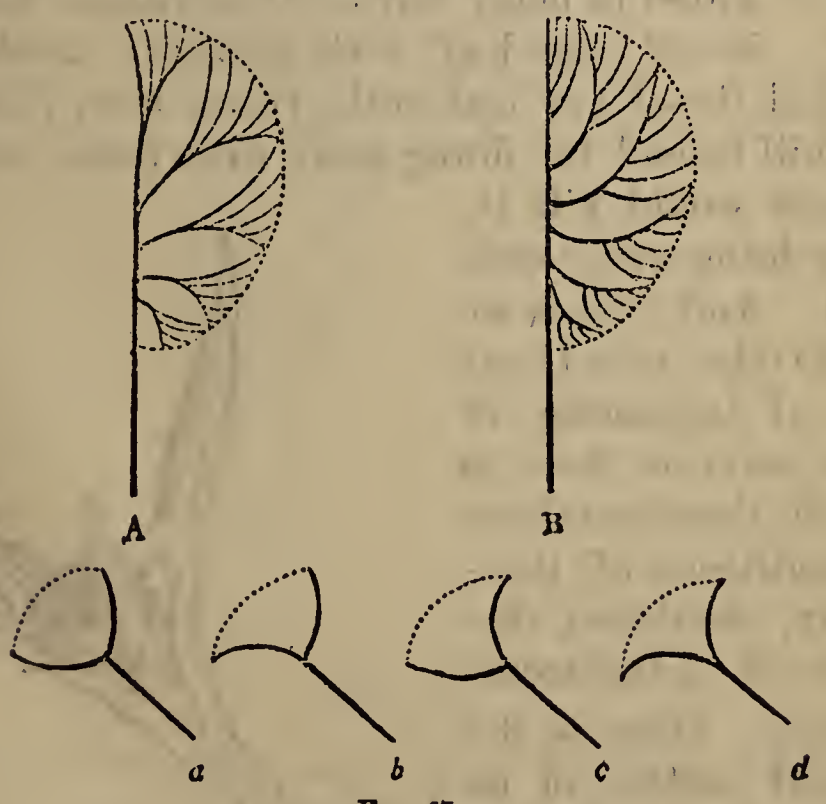


FIG. 67.

will give a triangular mass, terminated by curves, and elongated at one extremity. These triangular masses you may see at a glance, prevailing in the branch system of any tree in winter. They may, of course, be mathematically reduced to the four types *a*, *b*, *c*, and *d*, Fig.

67, but are capable of endless variety of expression in action, and in the adjustment of their weights to the bearing stem.

§ 17. To conclude, then, we find that the beauty of these buildings of the leaves consists, from the first step of it to the last, in its showing their perfect fellowship; and a single aim uniting them under circumstances of various distress, trial, and pleasure. Without the fellowship, no beauty; without the steady purpose, no beauty; without trouble, and death, no beauty; without individual pleasure, freedom, and caprice, so far as may be consistent with the universal good, no beauty.

Fig. 68.

§ 18. Tree-loveliness might be thus lost or killed in many ways. Discordance would kill it—of one leaf with another; disobedience would kill it—of any leaf to the ruling law; indulgence would kill it, and the doing away with pain; or slavish symmetry would kill it, and the doing away with delight. And this is so, down to the smallest atom and beginning of life; so soon as there is life at all, there are these four conditions of it;—harmony, obedience, distress, and delightsome inequality. Here is the magnified section of an oak-bud, not the size of a wheat grain (Fig. 68). Already its nascent leaves are seen arranged under the perfect law of resilience, preparing for stoutest work on the right side. Here is a dogwood bud just

Fig. 69.

opening into life (Fig. 69). Its ruling law is to be four square, but see how the uppermost leaf takes the lead, and the lower bends up, already a little distressed by the effort. Here is a birch-bud, farther advanced, Fig. 70. Who shall say how many humors the little thing has in its mind already; or how many adventures it

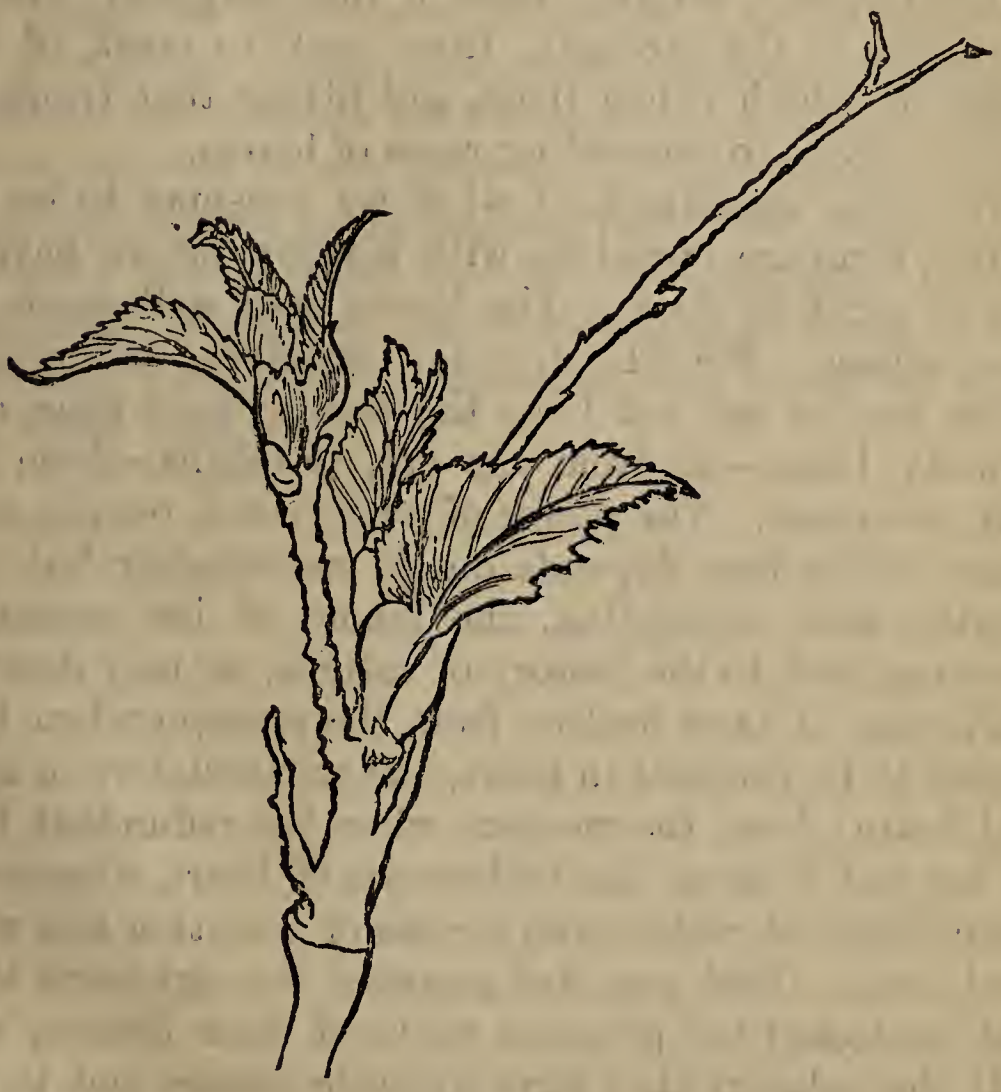


Fig. 70.

has passed through? And so to the end. Help, submission, sorrow, dissimilarity, are the sources of all good;—war, disobedience, luxury, equality, the sources of all evil.

§ 19. There is yet another and a deeply laid lesson to be received from the leaf-builders, which I hope the reader has already perceived. Every leaf, we have seen,

connects its work with the entire and accumulated result of the work of its predecessors. Their previous construction served it during its life, raised it towards the light, gave it more free sway and motion in the wind, and removed it from the noxiousness of earth exhalation. Dying, it leaves its own small but well-labored thread, adding, though imperceptibly, yet essentially, to the strength, from root to crest, of the trunk on which it had lived, and fitting that trunk for better service to succeeding races of leaves.

We men, sometimes, in what we presume to be humility, compare ourselves with leaves; but we have as yet no right to do so. The leaves may well scorn the comparison. We who live for ourselves, and neither know how to use nor keep the work of past time, may humbly learn,—as from the ant, foresight,—from the leaf, reverence. The power of every great people, as of every living tree, depends on its not effacing, but confirming and concluding, the labors of its ancestors. Looking back to the history of nations, we may date the beginning of their decline from the moment when they ceased to be reverent in heart, and accumulative in hand and brain; from the moment when the redundant fruit of age hid in them the hollowness of heart, whence the simplicities of custom and sinews of tradition had withered away. Had men but guarded the righteous laws, and protected the precious works of their fathers, with half the industry they have given to change and to ravage, they would not now have been seeking vainly, in millennial visions and mechanic servitudes, the accomplishment of the promise made to them so long ago: "As the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands; they shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them."

§ 20. This lesson we have to take from the leaf's life. One more we may receive from its death. If ever in autumn a pensiveness falls upon us as the leaves drift by in their fading, may we not wisely look up in hope to their mighty monuments? Behold how fair, how far prolonged, in arch and aisle, the avenues of the valleys; the fringes of the hills! So stately,—so eternal; the joy of man, the comfort of all living creatures, the glory of the earth,—they are but the monuments of those poor leaves that flit faintly past us to die. Let them not pass, without our understanding their last counsel and example: that we also, careless of monument by the grave, may build it in the world—monument by which men may be taught to remember, not where we died, but where we lived.

CHAPTER IX.

THE LEAF SHADOWS.

§ 1. It may be judged, by the time which it has taken to arrive at any clear idea of the structure of shield-builders, what a task would open to us if we endeavored to trace the more wonderful forms of the wild builders with the sword. Not that they are more complex; but they are more definite, and cannot be so easily generalized. The conditions which produce the spire of the cypress, and flaked breadth of the cedar, the rounded head of the stone pine, and perfect pyramid of the black spruce, are far more distinct, and would require more accurate and curious diagrams to illustrate them, than the graceful, but in some degree monotonous, branching of leaf-builders. In broad principle they are, however, alike. The leaves construct the sprays in the same accumulative way: the only essential difference being that in the sword-builders the leaves are all set close, and at equal intervals. Instead of admitting extended and variable spaces between them, the whole spray is one tower of leaf-roots, set in a perfect spiral. Thus, Fig. 71, at A, represents a fragment of spray of Scotch fir of its real size. B is the same piece magnified, the diamond-like spaces being the points on which the leaves grew. The dotted lines show the regularity of the spiral. As the minor stems join in boughs, the scars left by the leaves are gradually effaced, and a thick but broken and scaly bark forms instead.

§ 2. A sword-builder may therefore be generally con-

sidered as a shield-builder put under the severest military restraint. The graceful and thin leaf is concentrated into a strong, narrow, pointed rod; and the insertion of these rods on them is in a close and perfectly timed order. In some ambiguous trees connected with the tribe (as the arbor vitæ) there is no proper stem to the outer leaves, but all the extremities form a kind of coralline leaf, flat and fern-like, but articulated like a crustacean animal, which gradually concentrates and embrowns itself into the stem. The thicker branches of these trees are exquisitely fantastic; and the mode in which the flat system of leaf first produces an irregular branch, and then adapts itself to the symmetrical cone of the whole tree, is one of the most interesting processes of form which I know in vegetation.

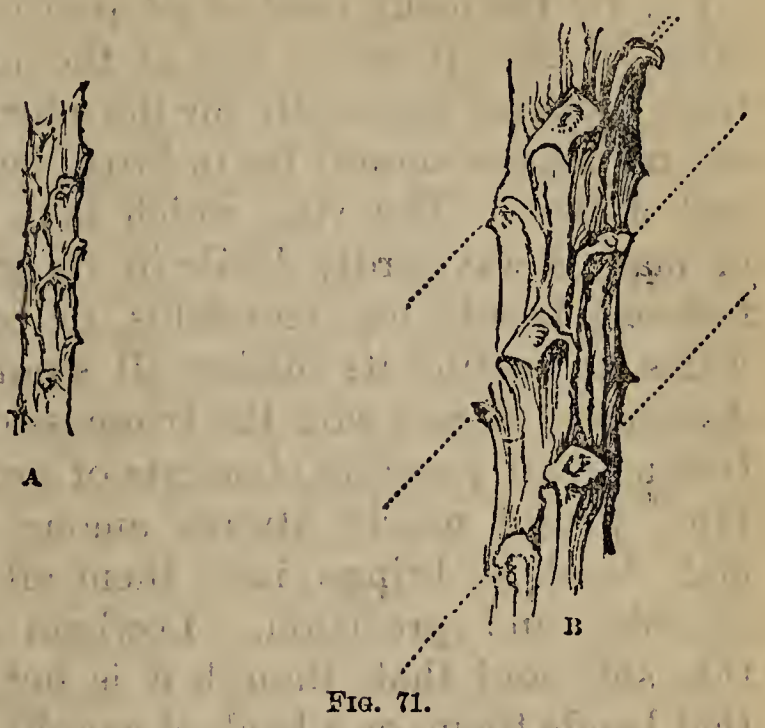


FIG. 71.

§ 3. Neither this, however, nor any other of the pine formations, have we space here to examine in detail; while without detail, all discussion of them is in vain. I shall only permit myself to note a few points respecting my favorite tree, the black spruce, not with any view to art criticism (though we might get at some curious results by a comparison of popular pine-drawing in Germany, America, and other dark-wooded countries, with the true natural forms), but because I think the expression of this tree has not been rightly understood by trav-

ellers in Switzerland, and that, with a little watching of it, they might easily obtain a juster feeling.

§ 4. Of the many marked adaptations of nature to the mind of man, it seems one of the most singular, that trees intended especially for the adornment of the wildest mountains should be in broad outline the most formal of trees. The vine, which is to be the companion of man, is waywardly docile in its growth, falling into festoons beside his cornfields, or roofing his garden-walks, or casting its shadow all summer upon his door. Associated always with the trimness of cultivation, it introduces all possible elements of sweet wildness. The pine, placed nearly always among scenes disordered and desolate, brings into them all possible elements of order and precision. Lowland trees may lean to this side and that, though it is but a meadow breeze that bends them, or a bank of cowslips from which their trunks lean aslope. But let storm and avalanche do their worst, and let the pine find only a ledge of vertical precipice to cling to, it will nevertheless grow straight. Thrust a rod from its last shoot down the stem;—it shall point to the centre of the earth as long as the tree lives.

§ 5. Also it may be well for lowland branches to reach hither and thither for what they need, and to take all kinds of irregular shape and extension. But the pine is trained to need nothing, and to endure everything. It is resolvedly whole, self-contained, desiring nothing but rightness, content with restricted completion. Tall or short, it will be straight. Small or large, it will be round. It may be permitted also to these soft lowland trees that they should make themselves gay with show of blossom, and glad with pretty charities of fruitfulness. We builders with the sword have harder work to do for man, and must do it in close-set troops. To stay the sliding of the mountain snows, which would

bury him; to hold in divided drops, at our sword-points, the rain, which would sweep away him and his treasure-fields; to nurse in shade among our brown fallen leaves the tricklings that feed the brooks in drought; to give massive shield against the winter wind, which shrieks through the bare branches of the plain:—such service must we do him steadfastly while we live. Our bodies, also, are at his service: softer than the bodies of other trees, though our toil is harder than theirs. Let him take them as pleases him, for his houses and ships. So also it may be well for these timid lowland trees to tremble with all their leaves, or turn their paleness to the sky, if but a rush of rain passes by them; or to let fall their leaves at last, sick and sere. But we pines must live carelessly amidst the wrath of clouds. We only wave our branches to and fro when the storm pleads with us, as men toss their arms in a dream.

And finally, these weak lowland trees may struggle fondly for the last remnants of life, and send up feeble saplings again from their roots when they are cut down. But we builders with the sword perish boldly; our dying shall be perfect and solemn, as our warring: we give up our lives without reluctance, and forever.*

§ 6. I wish the reader to fix his attention for a moment on these two great characters of the pine, its straightness and rounded perfectness; both wonderful, and in their issue lovely, though they have hitherto prevented the tree from being drawn. I say, first, its straightness. Because we constantly see it in the wildest scenery, we are apt to remember only as characteristic examples of it those which have been disturbed by violent accident or disease. Of course such instances are frequent. The soil of the pine is subject to contin-

* "Crœsus, therefore, having heard these things, sent word to the people of Lampsacus that they should let Miltiades go; and, if not, he would cut them down like a pine-tree."—*Herod.* vi. 37.

ual change; perhaps the rock in which it is rooted splits in frost and falls forward, throwing the young stems aslope, or the whole mass of earth around it is undermined by rain, or a huge boulder falls on its stem from above, and forces it for twenty years to grow with weight of a couple of tons leaning on its side. Hence, especially at edges of loose cliffs, about waterfalls, or at glacier banks, and in other places liable to disturbance, the pine may be seen distorted and oblique; and in Turner's "Source of the Arveron," he has, with his usual unerring perception of the main point in any matter, fastened on this means of relating the glacier's history. The glacier cannot explain its own motion; and ordinary observers saw in it only its rigidity; but Turner saw that the wonderful thing was its non-rigidity. Other ice is fixed, only this ice stirs. All the banks are staggering beneath its waves, crumbling and withered as by the blast of a perpetual storm. He made the rocks of his foreground loose—rolling and tottering down together; the pines, smitten aside by them, their tops dead, bared by the ice wind.

§ 7. Nevertheless, this is not the truest or universal expression of the pine's character. I said long ago, even of Turner: "Into the spirit of the pine he cannot enter." He understood the glacier at once; he had seen the force of sea on shore too often to miss the action of those crystal-crested waves. But the pine was strange to him, adverse to his delight in broad and flowing line; he refused its magnificent erectness. Magnificent!—nay, sometimes, almost terrible. Other trees, tufting crag or hill, yield to the form and sway of the ground, clothe it with soft compliance, are partly its subjects, partly its flatterers, partly its comforters. But the pine rises in serene resistance, self-contained; nor can I ever without awe stay long under a great Alpine cliff, far from all house or work of men, looking up to its com-

panies of pine, as they stand on the inaccessible juts and perilous ledges of the enormous wall, in quiet multitudes, each like the shadow of the one beside it—upright, fixed, spectral, as troops of ghosts standing on the walls of Hades, not knowing each other—dumb for ever. You cannot reach them, cannot cry to them;—those trees never heard human voice; they are far above all sound but of the winds. No foot ever stirred fallen leaf of theirs. All comfortless they stand, between the two eternities of the Vacancy and the Rock: yet with such iron will, that the rock itself looks bent and shattered beside them—fragile, weak, inconsistent, compared to their dark energy of delicate life, and monotony of enchanted pride:—unnumbered, unconquerable.

§ 8. Then note, farther, their perfectness. The impression on most people's minds must have been received more from pictures than reality, so far as I can judge;—so ragged they think the pine; whereas its chief character in health is green and full roundness. It stands compact, like one of its own cones, slightly curved on its sides, finished and quaint as a carved tree in some Elizabethan garden; and instead of being wild in expression, forms the softest of all forest scenery; for other trees show their trunks and twisting boughs: but the pine, growing either in luxuriant mass or in happy isolation, allows no branch to be seen. Summit behind summit rise its pyramidal ranges, or down to the very grass sweep the circlets of its boughs; so that there is nothing but green cone and green carpet. Nor is it only softer, but in one sense more cheerful than other foliage; for it casts only a pyramidal shadow. Lowland forest arches overhead, and chequers the ground with darkness; but the pine, growing in scattered groups, leaves the glades between emerald-bright. Its gloom is all its own; narrowing into the sky, it lets the sunshine strike down to the dew. And if ever a superstitious feeling comes over

me among the pine-glades, it is never tainted with the old German forest fear; but is only a more solemn tone of the fairy enchantment that haunts our English meadows; so that I have always called the prettiest pine-glade in Chamouni, "Fairies' Hollow." It is in the glen beneath the steep ascent above Pont Pelissier, and may be reached by a little winding path which goes down from the top of the hill; being, indeed, not truly a glen, but a broad ledge of moss and turf, leaning in a formidable precipice (which, however, the gentle branches hide) over the Arve. An almost isolated rock promontory, many-colored, rises at the end of it. On the other sides it is bordered by cliffs, from which a little cascade falls, literally down among the pines, for it is so light, shaking itself into mere showers of seed pearl in the sun, that the pines don't know it from mist, and grow through it without minding. Underneath, there is only the mossy silence, and above, forever, the snow of the nameless Aiguille.

§ 9. And then the third character which I want you to notice in the pine is its exquisite fineness. Other trees rise against the sky in dots and knots, but this in fringes.*

* Keats (as is his way) puts nearly all that may be said of the pine into one verse, though they are only figurative pines of which he is speaking. I have come to that pass of admiration for him now, that I dare not read him, so discontented he makes me with my own work: but others must not leave unread, in considering the influence of trees upon the human soul, that marvellous ode to Psyche. Here is the piece about pines:—

"Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane
In some untrodden region of my mind,
Where branchéd thoughts, new grown with pleasant pain,
Instead of pines, shall murmur in the wind:
Far, far around shall those dark-clustered trees
Fledge the wild-ridged mountains, steep by steep;
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lull'd to sleep;
And in the midst of this wide quietness
A rosy sanctuary will I dress

You never see the edges of it, so subtle are they; and for this reason, it alone of trees, so far as I know, is capable of the fiery change which we saw before had been noticed by Shakspeare. When the sun rises behind a ridge crested with pine, provided the ridge be at a distance of about two miles, and seen clear, all the trees, for about three or four degrees on each side of the sun, become trees of light, seen in clear flame against the darker sky, and dazzling as the sun itself. I thought at first this was owing to the actual lustre of the leaves; but I believe now it is caused by the cloud-dew upon them,—every minutest leaf carrying its diamond. It seems as if these trees, living always among the clouds, had caught part of their glory from them; and themselves the darkest of vegetation, could yet add splendor to the sun itself.

§ 10. Yet I have been more struck by their character of finished delicacy at a distance from the central Alps, among the pastoral hills of the Emmenthal, or lowland districts of Berne, where they are set in groups between the cottages, whose shingle roofs (they also of pine) of deep gray blue, and lightly carved fronts, golden and orange in the autumn sunshine,* gleam on the banks and lawns of hill-side,—endless lawns, mounded, and studded, and bossed all over with deeper green hay-heaps, orderly set, like jewellery (the mountain hay,

> With the wreath'd trellis of a working brain,
> With buds, and bells, and stars without a name,
> With all the Gardener Fancy e'er could feign,
> Who, breeding flowers, will never breed the same.
> And there shall be for thee all soft delight
> That shadowy thought can win;
> A bright torch, and a casement ope, at night,
> To let the warm Love in."

* There has been much cottage-building about the hills lately, with very pretty carving, the skill in which has been encouraged by travellers; and the fresh-cut larch is splendid in color under rosy sunlight.

when the pastures are full of springs, being strangely dark and fresh in verdure for a whole day after it is cut). And amidst this delicate delight of cottage and field, the young pines stand delicatest of all, scented as with frankincense, their slender stems straight as arrows, and crystal white, looking as if they would break with a touch, like needles; and their arabesques of dark leaf pierced through and through by the pale radiance of clear sky, opal blue, where they follow each other along the soft hill-ridges, up and down.

§ 11. I have watched them in such scenes with the deeper interest, because of all trees they have hitherto had most influence on human character. The effect of other vegetation, however great, has been divided by mingled species; elm and oak in England, poplar in France, birch in Scotland, olive in Italy and Spain, share their power with inferior trees, and with all the changing charm of successive agriculture. But the tremendous unity of the pine absorbs and moulds the life of a race. The pine shadows rest upon a nation. The Northern peoples, century after century, lived under one or other of the two great powers of the Pine and the Sea, both infinite. They dwelt amidst the forests, as they wandered on the waves, and saw no end, nor any other horizon; still the dark green trees, or the dark green waters, jagged the dawn with their fringe, or their foam. And whatever elements of imagination, or of warrior strength, or of domestic justice, were brought down by the Norwegian and the Goth against the dissoluteness or degradation of the South of Europe, were taught them under the green roofs and wild penetralia of the pine.

§ 12. I do not attempt, delightful as the task would be, to trace this influence (mixed with superstition) in Scandinavia, or North Germany; but let us at least note it in the instance which we speak of so frequently,

yet so seldom take to heart. There has been much dispute respecting the character of the Swiss, arising out of the difficulty which other nations had to understand their simplicity. They were assumed to be either romantically virtuous, or basely mercenary, when in fact they were neither heroic nor base, but were true-hearted men, stubborn with more than any recorded stubbornness; not much regarding their lives, yet not casting them causelessly away; forming no high ideal of improvement, but never relaxing their grasp of a good they had once gained; devoid of all romantic sentiment, yet loving with a practical and patient love that neither wearied nor forsook; little given to enthusiasm in religion, but maintaining their faith in a purity which no worldliness deadened and no hypocrisy soiled; neither chivalrously generous nor pathetically humane, yet never pursuing their defeated enemies, nor suffering their poor to perish; proud, yet not allowing their pride to prick them into unwary or unworthy quarrel; avaricious, yet contentedly rendering to their neighbor his due; dull, but clear-sighted to all the principles of justice; and patient, without ever allowing delay to be prolonged by sloth, or forbearance by fear.

§ 13. This temper of Swiss mind, while it animated the whole confederacy, was rooted chiefly in one small district which formed the heart of their country, yet lay not among its highest mountains. Beneath the glaciers of Zermatt and Evolena, and on the scorching slopes of the Valais, the peasants remained in an aimless torpor, unheard of but as the obedient vassals of the great Bishopric of Sion. But where the lower ledges of calcareous rock were broken by the inlets of the Lake Lucerne, and bracing winds penetrating from the north forbade the growth of the vine, compelling the peasantry to adopt an entirely pastoral life, was reared another race of men. Their narrow domain should be

marked by a small green spot on every map of Europe. It is about forty miles from east to west; as many from north to south: yet on that shred of rugged ground, while every kingdom of the world around it rose or fell in fatal change, and every multitudinous race mingled or wasted itself in various dispersion and decline, the simple shepherd dynasty remained changeless. There is no record of their origin. They are neither Goths, Burgundians, Romans, nor Germans. They have been forever Helvetii, and for ever free. Voluntarily placing themselves under the protection of the House of Hapsburg, they acknowledged its supremacy, but resisted its oppression; and rose against the unjust governors it appointed over them, not to gain, but to redeem, their liberties. Victorious in the struggle by the Lake of Egeri, they stood the foremost standard-bearers among the nations of Europe in the cause of loyalty and life—loyalty in its highest sense, to the laws of God's helpful justice, and of man's faithful and brotherly fortitude.

§ 14. You will find among them, as I said, no subtle wit nor high enthusiasm, only an undeceivable common sense, and an obstinate rectitude. They cannot be persuaded into their duties, but they feel them; they use no phrases of friendship, but do not fail you at your need. Questions of creed, which other nations sought to solve by logic or reverie, these shepherds brought to practical tests: sustained with tranquillity the excommunication of abbots who wanted to feed their cattle on other people's fields, and, halbert in hand, struck down the Swiss Reformation, because the Evangelicals of Zurich refused to send them their due supplies of salt. Not readily yielding to the demands of superstition, they were patient under those of economy; they would purchase the remission of taxes, but not of sins; and while the sale of indulgences was arrested in the church of Ensiedlen as boldly as at the gates of Wittenberg,

the inhabitants of the valley of Frutigen * ate no meat for seven years, in order peacefully to free themselves and their descendants from the seigniorial claims of the Baron of Thurm.

§ 15. What praise may be justly due to this modest and rational virtue, we have perhaps no sufficient grounds for defining. It must long remain questionable how far the vices of superior civilization may be atoned for by its achievements, and the errors of more transcendental devotion forgiven to its rapture. But, take it for what we may, the character of this peasantry is, at least, serviceable to others and sufficient for their own peace; and in its consistency and simplicity, it stands alone in the history of the human heart. How far it was developed by circumstances of natural phenomena may also be disputed; nor should I enter into such dispute with any strongly held conviction. The Swiss have certainly no feelings respecting their mountains in anywise correspondent to ours. It was rather as fortresses of defence, than as spectacles of splendor, that the cliffs of the Rothstock bare rule over the destinies of those who dwelt at their feet; and the training for which the mountain children had to thank the slopes of the Muotta-Thal, was in soundness of breath, and steadiness of limb, far more than in elevation of idea. But the point which I desire the reader to note is, that the character of the scene which, if any, appears to have been impressive to the inhabitant, is not that which we ourselves feel when we enter the district. It was not from their lakes, nor their cliffs, nor their glaciers—though these were all peculiarly their possession, that the three venerable cantons or states received their name. They were not called the States of the Rock, nor the States of the Lake, but the States of the *Forest.*

* This valley is on the pass of the Gemmi in Canton Berne, but the people are the same in temper as those of the Waldstetten.

And the one of the three which contains the most touching record of the spiritual power of Swiss religion, in the name of the convent of the "Hill of Angels," has, for its own, none but the sweet childish name of "Under the Woods."

§ 16. And indeed you may pass under them if, leaving the most sacred spot in Swiss history, the Meadow of the Three Fountains, you bid the boatman row southward a little way by the shore of the Bay of Uri. Steepest there on its western side, the walls of its rocks ascend to heaven. Far, in the blue of evening, like a great cathedral pavement, lies the lake in its darkness; and you may hear the whisper of innumerable falling waters return from the hollows of the cliff, like the voices of a multitude praying under their breath. From time to time the beat of a wave, slow-lifted, where the rocks lean over the black depth, dies heavily as the last note of a requiem. Opposite, green with steep grass, and set with chalet villages, the Fron-Alp rises in one solemn glow of pastoral light and peace; and above, against the clouds of twilight, ghostly on the gray precipice, stand, myriad by myriad, the shadowy armies of the Unterwalden pine.*

I have seen that it is possible for the stranger to pass through this great chapel, with its font of waters, and mountain pillars, and vaults of cloud, without being touched by one noble thought, or stirred by any sacred passion; but for those who received from its waves the baptism of their youth, and learned beneath its rocks the fidelity of their manhood, and watched amidst its clouds the likeness of the dream of life with the eyes of age—for these I will not believe that the mountain shrine was built, or the calm of its forest-shadows guarded by their God, in vain.

* The cliff immediately bordering the lake is in Canton Uri; the green hills of Unterwalden rise above. This is the grandest piece of the shore of Lake Lucerne; the rocks near Tell's Chapel are neither so lofty nor so precipitous.

CHAPTER X.

LEAVES MOTIONLESS.

§ 1. It will be remembered that our final inquiry was to be into the sources of beauty in the tented plants, or flowers of the field; which the reader may perhaps suppose one of no great difficulty, the beauty of flowers being somewhat generally admitted and comprehended.

Admitted? yes. Comprehended? no; and, which is worse, in all its highest characters, for many a day yet, incomprehensible: though with a little steady application, I suppose we might soon know more than we do now about the colors of flowers,—being tangible enough, and staying longer than those of clouds. We have discovered something definite about colors of opal and of peacock's plume; perhaps, also, in due time we may give some account of that true gold (the only gold of intrinsic value) which gilds buttercups; and understand how the spots are laid, in painting a pansy.

Art is of interest, when we may win any of its secrets; but to such knowledge the road lies not up brick streets. And howsoever that flower-painting may be done, one thing is certain, it is not by machinery.

§ 2. Perhaps, it may be thought, if we understood flowers better, we might love them less.

We do not love them much, as it is. Few people care about flowers. Many, indeed, are fond of finding a new shape of blossom, caring for it as a child cares about a kaleidoscope. Many, also, like a fair service of flowers in the greenhouse, as a fair service of plate on the table.

Many are scientifically interested in them, though even these in the nomenclature rather than the flowers. And a few enjoy their gardens; but I have never heard of a piece of land, which would let well on a building lease, remaining unlet because it was a flowery piece. I have never heard of parks being kept for wild hyacinths, though often of their being kept for wild beasts. And the blossoming time of the year being principally spring, I perceive it to be the mind of most people, during that period, to stay in towns.

§ 3. A year or two ago, a keen-sighted and eccentrically-minded friend of mine, having taken it into his head to violate this national custom, and go to the Tyrol in spring, was passing through a valley near Landech, with several similarly headstrong companions. A strange mountain appeared in the distance, belted about its breast with a zone of blue, like our English Queen. Was it a blue cloud? A blue horizontal bar of the air that Titian breathed in youth, seen now far away, which mortal might never breathe again? Was it a mirage—a meteor? Would it stay to be approached? (ten miles of winding road yet between them and the foot of its mountain). Such questioning had they concerning it. My keen-sighted friend alone maintained it to be substantial: whatever it might be, it was not air, and would not vanish. The ten miles of road were overpassed, the carriage left, the mountain climbed. It stayed patiently, expanding still into richer breadth and heavenlier glow—a belt of gentians. Such things may verily be seen among the Alps in spring, and in spring only. Which being so, I observe most people prefer going in autumn.

§ 4. Nevertheless, without any special affection for them, most of us, at least, languidly consent to the beauty of flowers, and occasionally gather them, and prefer them from among other forms of vegetation. This, strange to say, is precisely what great painters do *not*.

Every other kind of object they paint, in its due place and office, with respect;—but, except compulsorily and imperfectly, never flowers. A curious fact, this! Here are men whose lives are spent in the study of color, and the one thing they will not paint is a flower! Anything but that. A furred mantle, a jewelled zone, a silken gown, a brazen corselet, nay, an old leathern chair, or a wall-paper if you will, with utmost care and delight;—but a flower by no manner of means, if avoidable. When the thing has perforce to be done, the great painters of course do it rightly. Titian, in his early work, sometimes carries a blossom or two out with affection, as the columbines in our Bacchus and Ariadne. So also Holbein. But in his later and mightier work, Titian will only paint a fan or a wristband intensely, never a flower. In his portrait of Lavinia, at Berlin, the roses are just touched finely enough to fill their place, with no affection whatever, and with the most subdued red possible; while in the later portrait of her, at Dresden, there are no roses at all, but a belt of chased golden balls, on every stud of which Titian has concentrated his strength, and I verily believe forgot the face a little, so much has his mind been set on them.

§ 5. In Paul Veronese's Europa, at Dresden, the entire foreground is covered with flowers, but they are executed with sharp and crude touches like those of a decorative painter. In Correggio's paintings, at Dresden, and in the Antiope of the Louvre, there are lovely pieces of foliage, but no flowers. A large garland of oranges and lemons, with their leaves, above the St. George, at Dresden, is connected traditionally with the garlanded backgrounds of Ghirlandajo and Mantegna, but the studious absence of flowers renders it almost disagreeably ponderous. I do not remember any painted by Velasquez, or by Tintoret, except compulsory Annunciation lilies. The flowers of Rubens are gross and rude; those of Van-

dyck vague, slight, and subdued in color, so as not to contend with the flesh. In his portraits of King Charles's children, at Turin, an enchanting picture, there is a rose-thicket, in which the roses seem to be enchanted the wrong way, for their leaves are all gray, and the flowers dull brick-red. Yet it is right.

§ 6. One reason for this is that all great men like their inferior forms to follow and obey contours of large surfaces, or group themselves in connected masses. Patterns do the first, leaves the last; but flowers stand separately.

Another reason is that the beauty of flower-petals and texture can only be seen by looking at it close; but flat patterns can be seen far off, as well as gleaming of metal-work. All the great men calculate their work for effect at some distance, and with that object, know it to be lost time to complete the drawing of flowers. Farther, the forms of flowers being determined, require a painful attention, and restrain the fancy; whereas, in painting fur, jewels, or bronze, the color and touch may be varied almost at pleasure, and without effort.

Again, much of what is best in flowers is inimitable in painting; and a thoroughly good workman feels the feebleness of his means when he matches them fairly with Nature, and gives up the attempt frankly—painting the rose dull red, rather than trying to rival its flush in sunshine.

And, lastly, in nearly all good landscape-painting, the breadth of foreground included implies such a distance of the spectator from the nearest object as must entirely prevent his seeing flower detail.

§ 7. There is, however, a deeper reason than all these; namely, that flowers have no sublimity. We shall have to examine the nature of sublimity in our following and last section, among other ideas of relation. Here I only note the fact briefly, that impressions of awe and sorrow being at the root of the sensation of sublimity, and the

beauty of separate flowers not being of the kind which connects itself with such sensation, there is a wide distinction, in general, between flower-loving minds and minds of the highest order. Flowers seem intended for the solace of ordinary humanity: children love them; quiet, tender, contented ordinary people love them as they grow; luxurious and disorderly people rejoice in them gathered: They are the cottager's treasure; and in the crowded town, mark, as with a little broken fragment of rainbow, the windows of the workers in whose heart rests the covenant of peace. Passionate or religious minds contemplate them with fond, feverish intensity; the affection is seen severely calm in the works of many old religious painters, and mixed with more open and true country sentiment in those of our own pre-Raphaelites. To the child and the girl, the peasant and the manufacturing operative, to the grisette and the nun, the lover and monk, they are precious always. But to the men of supreme power and thoughtfulness, precious only at times; symbolically and pathetically often to the poets, but rarely for their own sake. They fall forgotten from the great workmen's and soldiers' hands. Such men will take, in thankfulness, crowns of leaves, or crowns of thorns—not crowns of flowers.

§ 8. Some beautiful things have been done lately, and more beautiful are likely to be done, by our younger painters, in representing blossoms of the orchard and the field in mass and extent. I have had something to do with the encouragement of this impulse; and truly, if pictures are to be essentially imitative rather than inventive, it is better to spend care in painting hyacinths than dead leaves, and roses rather than stubble. Such work, however, as I stated in my first essay on this subject, in the year 1851,* can only connect itself with the

* *Pre-Raphaelitism.* The essay contains some important notes on Turner's work, which, therefore, I do not repeat in this volume.

great schools by becoming inventive instead of copyist; and for the most part, I believe these young painters would do well to remember that the best beauty of flowers being wholly inimitable, and their sweetest service unrenderable by art, the picture involves some approach to an unsatisfying mockery, in the cold imagery of what Nature has given to be breathed with the profuse winds of spring, and touched by the happy footsteps of youth.

§ 9. Among the greater masters, as I have said, there is little laborious or affectionate flower-painting. The utmost that Turner ever allows in his foregrounds is a water-lily or two, a cluster of heath or fox-glove, a thistle sometimes, a violet or daisy, or a bindweed-bell; just enough to lead the eye into the understanding of the rich mystery of his more distant leafage. Rich mystery, indeed, respecting which these following facts about the foliage of tented plants must be noted carefully.

§ 10. Two characters seem especially aimed at by Nature in the earth-plants: first, that they should be characteristic and interesting; secondly, that they should not be very visibly injured by crushing.

I say, first, characteristic. The leaves of large trees take approximately simple forms, slightly monotonous. They are intended to be seen in mass. But the leaves of the herbage at our feet take all kinds of strange shapes, as if to invite us to examine them. Star-shaped, heart-shaped, spear-shaped, arrow-shaped, fretted, fringed, cleft, furrowed, serrated, sinuated; in whorls, in tufts, in spires, in wreaths endlessly expressive, deceptive, fantastic, never the same from footstalk to blossom; they seem perpetually to tempt our watchfulness, and take delight in outstripping our wonder.

§ 11. Secondly, observe, their forms are such as will not be visibly injured by crushing. Their complexity is already disordered: jags and rents are their laws of being; rent by the footstep they betray no harm. Here,

for instance (Fig. 72), is the mere outline of a buttercup-leaf in full free growth; which, perhaps, may be taken as a good common type of earth foliage. Fig. 73 is a less advanced one, placed so as to show its symmetrical bounding form. But both, how various;—how delicately

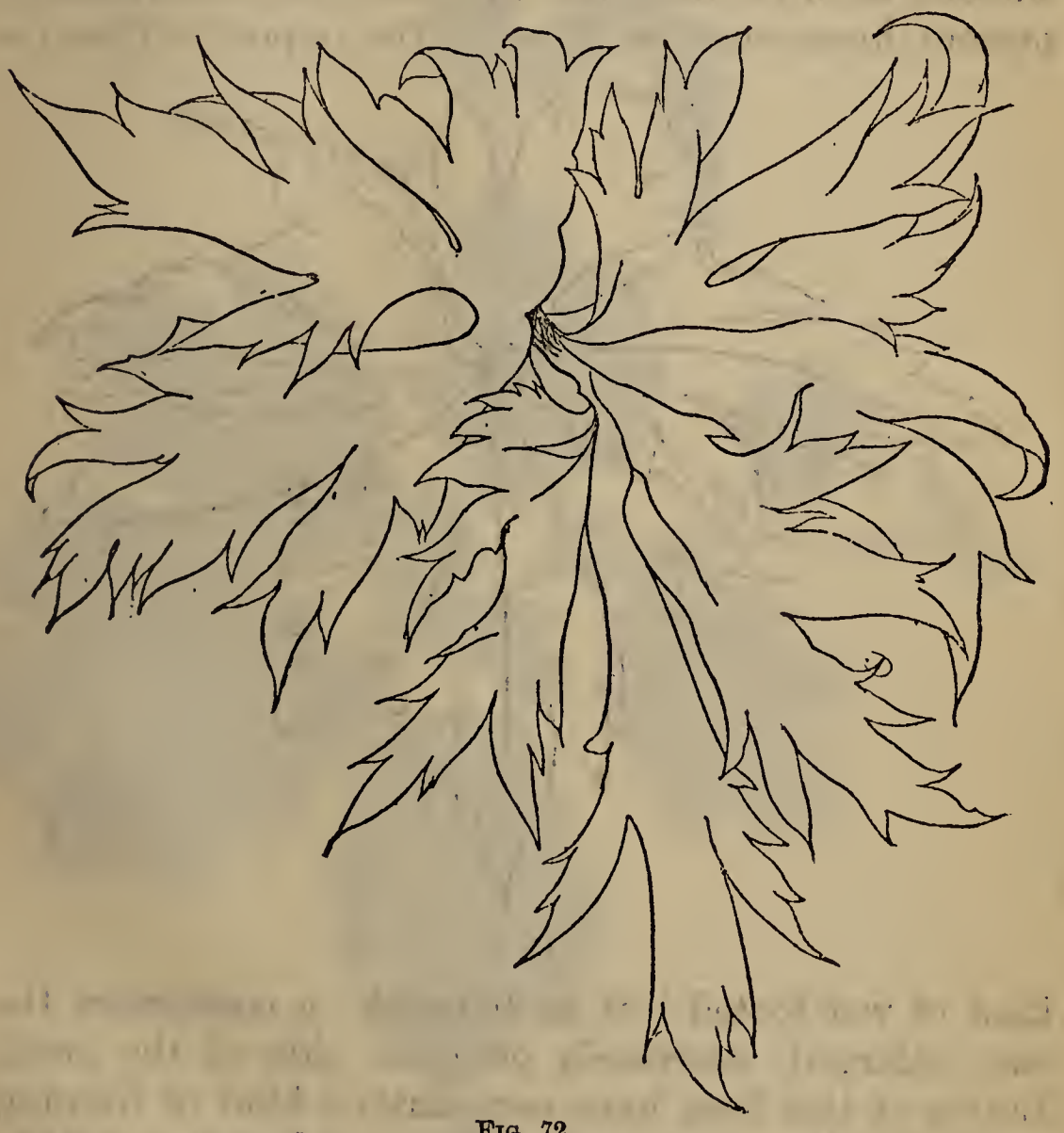


Fig. 72.

rent into beauty! As in the aiguilles of the great Alps, so in this lowest field-herb, where rending is the law of being, it is the law of loveliness.

§ 12. One class, however, of these torn leaves, peculiar to the tented plants, has, it seems to me, a strange expressional function. I mean the group of leaves rent

into *alternate* gaps, typically represented by the thistle. The alternation of the rent, if not absolutely, is effectively, peculiar to the earth-plants. Leaves of the builders are rent symmetrically, so as to form radiating groups, as in the horse-chestnut, or they are irregularly sinuous, as in the oak; but the earth-plants continually present forms such as those in the opposite Plate: a

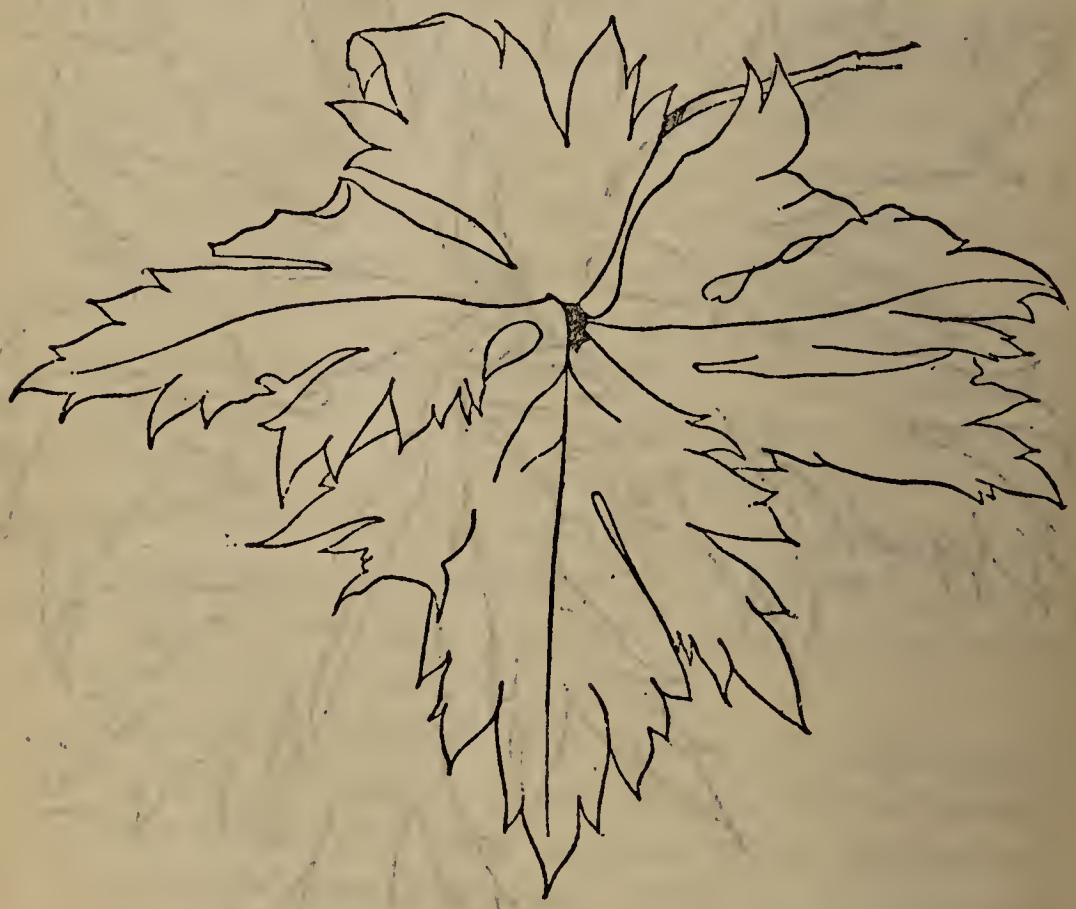


FIG. 73.

kind of web-footed leaf, so to speak; a continuous tissue, enlarged alternately on each side of the stalk. Leaves of this form have necessarily a kind of limping gait, as if they grew not all at once, but first a little bit on one side, and then a little bit on the other, and wherever they occur in quantity, give the expression to foreground vegetation which we feel and call "ragged."

§ 13. It is strange that the mere alternation of the rent should give this effect; the more so, because alternate leaves, completely separate from each other, pro-

PLATE LXI.—THE RENDING OF LEAVES.

duce one of the most graceful types of building plants. Yet the fact is indeed so, that the alternate rent in the earth-leaf is the principal cause of its ragged effect. However deeply it may be rent symmetrically, as in the alchemilla, or buttercup, just instanced, and however finely divided, as in the parsleys, the result is always a delicate richness, unless the jags are alternate, and the leaf-tissue continuous at the stem; and the moment these conditions appear, so does the raggedness.

§ 14. It is yet more worthy of note that the proper duty of these leaves, which catch the eye so clearly and powerfully, would appear to be to draw the attention of man to spots where his work is needed, for they nearly all habitually grow on ruins or neglected ground: not noble ruins, or on *wild* ground, but on heaps of rubbish, or pieces of land which have been indolently cultivated or much disturbed. The leaf on the right of the tree in the Plate, which is the most characteristic of the class, is that of the Sisymbrium Irio, which grows, by choice, always on ruins left by fire. The plant, which, as far as I have observed, grows first on earth that has been moved, is the coltsfoot: its broad covering leaf is much jagged, but only irregular, not alternate in the rent; but the weeds that mark habitual neglect, such as the thistle, give clear alternation.

§ 15. The aspects of complexity and carelessness of injury are farther increased in the herb of the field, because it is "herb yielding seed;" that is to say, a seed different in character from that which trees form in their fruit.

I am somewhat alarmed in reading over the above sentence, lest a botanist, or other scientific person, should open the book at it. For of course the essential character of either fruit or seed being only that in the smallest compass the vital principle of the plant is rendered portable, and for some time, preservable, we ought to call every such vegetable dormitory a "fruit" or a

"seed" indifferently. But with respect to man there is a notable difference between them.

A seed is what we "sow."

A fruit, what we "enjoy."

Fruit is seed prepared especially for the sight and taste of man and animals; and in this sense we have true fruit and traitorous fruit (poisonous); but it is perhaps the best available distinction,* that seed being the part necessary for the renewed birth of the plant, a fruit is such seed enclosed or sustained by some extraneous substance, which is soft and juicy, and beautifully colored, pleasing and useful to animals and men.

§ 16. I find it convenient in this volume, and wish I had thought of the expedient before, whenever I get into a difficulty, to leave the reader to work it out. He will perhaps, therefore, be so good as to define fruit for himself. Having defined it, he will find that the sentence about which I was alarmed above is, in the main, true, and that tented plants principally are herb yielding seed, while building plants give fruit. The berried shrubs of rock and wood, however dwarfed in stature, are true builders. The strawberry-plant is the only important exception—a tender Bedouin.

§ 17. Of course the principal reason for this is the plain, practical one, that fruit should not be trampled on, and had better perhaps be put a little out of easy

* I say the "best available distinction." It is, of course, no real distinction. A peapod is a kind of central type of seed and seed-vessel, and it is difficult so to define fruit as to keep clear of it. Pea-shells are boiled and eaten in some countries rather than pease. It does not sound like a scientific distinction to say that fruit is a "shell which is good without being boiled." Nay, even if we humiliate ourselves into this practical reference to the kitchen, we are still far from success. For the pulp of a strawberry is not a "shell," the seeds being on the outside of it. The available part of a pomegranate or orange, though a seed envelope, is itself shut within a less useful rind. While in an almond the shell becomes less profitable still, and all goodness retires into the seed itself, as in a grain of corn.

reach than too near the hand, so that it may not be gathered wantonly or without some little trouble, and may be waited for until it is properly ripe: while the plants meant to be trampled on have small and multitudinous seed, hard and wooden, which may be shaken and scattered about without harm.

Also, fine fruit is often only to be brought forth with patience; not by young and hurried trees—but in due time, after much suffering; and the best fruit is often to be an adornment of old age, so as to supply the want of other grace. While the plants which will not work, but only bloom and wander, do not (except the grasses) bring forth fruit of high service, but only the seed that prolongs their race, the grasses alone having great honor put on them for their humility, as we saw in our first account of them.

§ 18. This being so, we find another element of very complex effect added to the others which exist in tented plants, namely, that of minute, granular, feathery, or downy seed-vessels, mingling quaint brown punctuation, and dusty tremors of dancing grain, with the bloom of the nearer fields; and casting a gossamered grayness and softness of plumy mist along their surfaces far away; mysterious evermore, not only with dew in the morning or mirage at noon, but with the shaking threads of fine arborescence, each a little belfry of grain-bells, all a-chime.

§ 19. I feel sorely tempted to draw one of these same spires of the fine grasses, with its sweet changing proportions of pendent grain, but it would be a useless piece of finesse, as such form of course never enters into general foreground effect.* I have, however, en-

* For the same reason, I enter into no considerations respecting the geometrical forms of flowers, though they are deeply interesting, and perhaps some day I may give a few studies of them separately. The reader should note, however, that beauty of form in flowers is chiefly

graved, at the top of the group of woodcuts opposite (Fig. 74), a single leaf cluster of Durer's foreground in the St. Hubert, which is interesting in several ways; as an example of modern work, no less than old; for it is a facsimile twice removed; being first drawn from the plate with the pen, by Mr. Allen, and then facsimiled on wood by Miss Byfield; and if the reader can compare it with the original, he will find it still come tolerably close in most parts (though the nearest large leaf has got spoiled), and of course some of the finest and most precious qualities of Durer's work are lost. Still, it gives a fair idea of his perfectness of conception, every leaf being thoroughly set in perspective, and drawn with unerring decision. On each side of it (Figs. 75, 76) are two pieces from a fairly good modern etching, which I oppose to the Durer in order to show the difference between true work and that which pretends to give detail, but is without feeling or knowledge. There are a great many leaves in the piece on the left, but they are all set the same way; the draughtsman has not conceived their real positions, but draws one after another as he would deliver a tale of bricks. The grasses on the right look delicate, but are a mere series of inorganic lines. Look how Durer's grass-blades cross each other. If you take a pen and copy a little piece of each example, you will soon feel the difference. Underneath, in the centre (Fig.77), is a piece of grass out of Landseer's etching of the "Ladies' Pets," more massive and effective than the two lateral fragments, but still loose and

dependent on a more accurately finished or more studiously varied development of the tre-foil, quatre-foil, and cinq-foil structures which we have seen irregularly approached by leaf-buds. The most beautiful six-foiled flowers (like the rhododendron-shoot) are composed of two triangular groups, one superimposed on the other, as in the narcissus; and the most interesting types both of six-foils and cinq-foils are unequally leaved, symmetrical on opposite sides, as the iris and violet.

Fig. 75.

Fig. 74.

Fig 76.

Fig. 77.

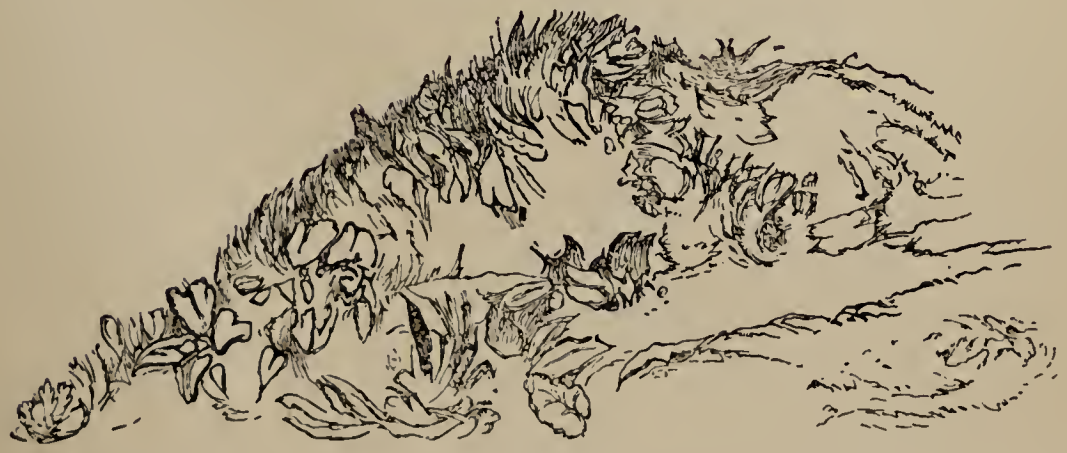


Fig. 78.

PLATE LXII.—RICHMOND FROM THE MOORS.

PLATE LXIII.--BY THE BROOKSIDE.

uncomposed. Then underneath is a piece of firm and good work again, which will stand with Durer's; it is the outline only of a group of leaves out of Turner's foreground in the Richmond from the Moors, of which I give a reduced etching, Plate 62, for the sake of the foreground principally, and in Plate 63, the group of leaves in question, in their light and shade, with the bridge beyond. What I have chiefly to say of them belongs to our section on composition; but this mere fragment of a Turner foreground may perhaps lead the reader to take note in his great pictures of the almost inconceivable labor with which he has sought to express the redundance and delicacy of ground leafage.

§ 20. By comparing the etching in Plate 62 with the published engraving, it will be seen how much yet remains to be done before any approximately just representation of Turner foreground can be put within the reach of the public. This Plate has been reduced by Mr. Armytage from a pen-drawing of mine, as large as the original of Turner's (18 inches by 11 inches). It will look a little better under a magnifying glass; but only a most costly engraving, of the real size, could give any idea of the richness of mossy and ferny leafage included in the real design. And if this be so on one of the ordinary England drawings of a barren Yorkshire moor, it may be imagined what the task would be of engraving truly such a foreground as that of the "Bay of Baiæ" or "Daphne and Leucippus," in which Turner's aim has been luxuriance.

§ 21. His mind recurred, in all these classical foregrounds, to strong impressions made upon him during his studies at Rome, by the masses of vegetation which enrich its heaps of ruin with their embroidery and bloom. I have always partly regretted these Roman studies, thinking that they led him into too great fondness of wandering luxuriance in vegetation, associated with de-

cay; and prevented his giving affection enough to the more solemn and more sacred infinity with which, among the mightier ruins of the Alpine Rome, glow the pure and motionless splendors of the gentian and the rose.

§ 22. Leaves motionless. The strong pines wave above them, and the weak grasses tremble beside them; but the blue stars rest upon the earth with a peace as of heaven; and far along the ridges of iron rock, moveless as they, the rubied crests of Alpine rose flush in the low rays of morning. Nor these yet the stillest leaves. Others there are subdued to a deeper quietness, the mute slaves of the earth, to whom we owe, perhaps, thanks, and tenderness, the most profound of all we have to render for the leaf ministries.

§ 23. It is strange to think of the gradually diminished power and withdrawn freedom among the orders of leaves—from the sweep of the chestnut and gadding of the vine, down to the close shrinking trefoil, and contented daisy, pressed on earth; and, at last, to the leaves that are not merely close to earth, but themselves a part of it; fastened down to it by their sides, here and there only a wrinkled edge rising from the granite crystals. We have found beauty in the tree yielding fruit, and in the herb yielding seed. How of the herb yielding *no* seed,* the fruitless, flowerless lichen of the rock?

§ 24. Lichen, and mosses (though these last in their luxuriance are deep and rich as herbage, yet both for the most part humblest of the green things that live),—how of these? Meek creatures! the first mercy of the earth, veiling with hushed softness its dintless rocks; creatures full of pity, covering with strange and tender honor the scarred disgrace of ruin,—laying quiet finger on the trembling stones, to teach them rest. No words,

* The reader must remember always that my work is concerning the *aspects* of things only. Of course, a lichen has seeds, just as other plants have, but not effectually or visibly for man.

that I know of, will say what these mosses are. None are delicate enough, none perfect enough, none rich enough. How is one to tell of the rounded bosses of furred and beaming green,—the starred divisions of rubied bloom, fine-filmed, as if the Rock Spirits could spin porphyry as we do glass,—the traceries of intricate silver, and fringes of amber, lustrous, arborescent, burnished through every fibre into fitful brightness and glossy traverses of silken change, yet all subdued and pensive, and framed for simplest, sweetest offices of grace. They will not be gathered, like the flowers, for chaplet or love-token; but of these the wild bird will make its nest, and the wearied child his pillow.

And, as the earth's first mercy, so they are its last gift to us. When all other service is vain, from plant and tree, the soft mosses and gray lichen take up their watch by the headstone. The woods, the blossoms, the gift-bearing grasses, have done their parts for a time, but these do service forever. Trees for the builder's yard, flowers for the bride's chamber, corn for the granary, moss for the grave.

§ 25. Yet as in one sense the humblest, in another they are the most honored of the earth-children. Unfading, as motionless, the worm frets them not, and the autumn wastes not. Strong in lowliness, they neither blanch in heat nor pine in frost. To them, slow-fingered, constant-hearted, is entrusted the weaving of the dark, eternal, tapestries of the hills; to them, slow-pencilled, iris-dyed, the tender framing of their endless imagery. Sharing the stillness of the unimpassioned rock, they share also its endurance; and while the winds of departing spring scatter the white hawthorn blossom like drifted snow, and summer dims on the parched meadow the drooping of its cowslip-gold,—far above, among the mountains, the silver lichen-spots rest, starlike, on the stone; and the gathering orange stain upon the edge of yonder western peak reflects the sunsets of a thousand years.

PART VII.

OF CLOUD BEAUTY.

CHAPTER I.

THE CLOUD-BALANCINGS.

§ 1. We have seen that when the earth had to be prepared for the habitation of man, a veil, as it were, of intermediate being was spread between him and its darkness, in which were joined, in a subdued measure, the stability and insensibility of the earth, and the passion and perishing of mankind.

But the heavens, also, had to be prepared for his habitation.

Between their burning light,—their deep vacuity, and man, as between the earth's gloom of iron substance, and man, a veil had to be spread of intermediate being;—which would appease the unendurable glory to the level of human feebleness, and sign the changeless motion of the heavens with a semblance of human vicissitude.

Between earth and man arose the leaf. Between the heaven and man came the cloud. His life being partly as the falling leaf, and partly as the flying vapor.

§ 2. Has the reader any distinct idea of what clouds are? We had some talk about them long ago, and perhaps thought their nature, though at that time not clear to us, would be easily enough understandable when we

put ourselves seriously to make it out. Shall we begin with one or two easiest questions?

That mist which lies in the morning so softly in the valley, level and white, through which the tops of the trees rise as if through an inundation—why is *it* so heavy? and why does it lie so low, being yet so thin and frail that it will melt away utterly into splendor of morning, when the sun has shone on it but a few moments more? Those colossal pyramids, huge and firm, with outlines as of rocks, and strength to bear the beating of the high sun full on their fiery flanks—why are *they* so light,—their bases high over our heads, high over the heads of Alps? why will these melt away, not as the sun rises, but as he descends, and leave the stars of twilight clear, while the valley vapor gains again upon the earth like a shroud?

Or that ghost of a cloud, which steals by yonder clump of pines; nay, which does *not* steal by them, but haunts them, wreathing yet round them, and yet—and yet, slowly: now falling in a fair waved line like a woman's veil; now fading, now gone: we look away for an instant, and look back, and it is again there. What has it to do with that clump of pines, that it broods by them and weaves itself among their branches, to and fro? Has it hidden a cloudy treasure among the moss at their roots, which it watches thus? Or has some strong enchanter charmed it into fond returning, or bound it fast within those bars of bough? And yonder filmy crescent, bent like an archer's bow above the snowy summit, the highest of all the hill,—that white arch which never forms but over the supreme crest,—how is it stayed there, repelled apparently from the snow—nowhere touching it, the clear sky seen between it and the mountain edge, yet never leaving it—poised as a white bird hovers over its nest?

Or those war-clouds that gather on the horizon, drag-

on-crested, tongued with fire;—how is their barbed strength bridled? what bits are these they are champing with their vaporous lips; flinging off flakes of black foam? Leagued leviathans of the Sea of Heaven, out of their nostrils goeth smoke, and their eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. The sword of him that layeth at them cannot hold the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon. Where ride the captains of their armies? Where are set the measures of their march? Fierce murmurers, answering each other from morning until evening—what rebuke is this which has awed them into peace? what hand has reined them back by the way by which they came?

§ 3. I know not if the reader will think at first that questions like these are easily answered. So far from it, I rather believe that some of the mysteries of the clouds never will be understood by us at all. "Knowest thou the balancings of the clouds?" Is the answer ever to be one of pride? "The wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge?" Is *our* knowledge ever to be so?

It is one of the most discouraging consequences of the varied character of this work of mine, that I am wholly unable to take note of the advance of modern science. What has conclusively been discovered or observed about clouds, I know not; but by the chance inquiry possible to me I find no book which fairly states the difficulties of accounting for even the ordinary aspects of the sky. I shall, therefore, be able in this section to do little more than suggest inquiries to the reader, putting the subject in clear form for him. All men accustomed to investigation will confirm me in saying that it is a great step when we are personally quite certain what we do *not* know.

§ 4. First, then, I believe we do not know what makes clouds float. Clouds are water, in some fine form or an-

other; but water is heavier than air, and the finest form you can give a heavy thing will not make it float in a light thing. *On* it, yes; as a boat: but *in* it, no. Clouds are not boats, nor boat-shaped, and they float in the air, not on the top of it. "Nay, but though unlike boats, may they not be like feathers? If out of quill substance there may be constructed eider-down, and out of vegetable tissue, thistle-down, both buoyant enough for a time, surely of water-tissue may be constructed also water-down, which will be buoyant enough for all cloudy purposes." Not so. Throw out your eider plumage in a calm day, and it will all come settling to the ground: slowly indeed, to aspect; but practically so fast that all our finest clouds would be here in a heap about our ears in an hour or two, if they were only made of water-feathers. "But may they not be quill-feathers, and have air inside them? May not all their particles be minute little balloons?"

A balloon only floats when the air inside it is either specifically, or by heating, lighter than the air it floats in. If the cloud-feathers had warm air inside their quills, a cloud would be warmer than the air about it, which it is not (I believe). And if the cloud-feathers had hydrogen inside their quills, a cloud would be unwholesome for breathing, which it is not—at least so it seems to me.

"But may they not have nothing inside their quills?" Then they would rise, as bubbles do through water, just as certainly as if they were solid feathers, they would fall. All our clouds would go up to the top of the air, and swim in eddies of cloud-foam.

"But is not that just what they do?" No. They float at different heights, and with definite forms, in the body of the air itself. If they rose like foam, the sky on a cloudy day would look like a very large flat glass of champagne seen from below, with a stream of bubbles

(or clouds) going up as fast as they could to a flat foam-ceiling.

"But may they not be just so nicely mixed out of something and nothing, as to float where they are wanted?"

Yes: that is just what they not only may, but must be: only this way of mixing something and nothing is the very thing I want to explain or have explained, and cannot do it, nor get it done.

§ 5. Except thus far. It is conceivable that minute hollow spherical globules might be formed of water, in which the enclosed vacuity just balanced the weight of the enclosing water, and that the arched sphere formed by the watery film was strong enough to prevent the pressure of the atmosphere from breaking it in. Such a globule would float like a balloon at the height in the atmosphere where the equipoise between the vacuum it enclosed, and its own excess of weight above that of the air, was exact. It would, probably, approach its companion globules by reciprocal attraction, and form aggregations which might be visible.

This is, I believe, the view usually taken by meteorologists. I state it as a possibility, to be taken into account in examining the question—a possibility confirmed by the scriptural words which I have taken for the title of this chapter.

§ 6. Nevertheless, I state it as a possibility only, not seeing how any known operation of physical law could explain the formation of such molecules. This, however, is not the only difficulty. Whatever shape the water is thrown into, it seems at first improbable that it should lose its property of wetness. Minute division of rain, as in "Scotch mist," makes it capable of floating farther,* or floating up and down a little, just as dust

* The buoyancy of solid bodies of a given specific gravity, in a given fluid, depends, first on their size, then on their forms.

First, on their size; that is to say, on the proportion of the magni-

will float, though pebbles will not; or gold-leaf, though a sovereign will not; but minutely divided rain wets as much as any other kind, whereas a cloud, partially always, sometimes entirely, loses its power of moistening. Some low clouds look, when you are in them, as if they were made of specks of dust, like short hairs; and these clouds are entirely dry. And also many clouds will wet some substances, but not others. So that we must grant farther, if we are to be happy in our theory, that the spherical molecules are held together by an attraction which prevents their adhering to any foreign body, or perhaps ceases only under some peculiar electric conditions.

§ 7. The question remains, even supposing their production accounted for, — What intermediate states of water may exist between these spherical hollow molecules and pure vapor?

tude of the object (irrespective of the distribution of its particles) to the magnitude of the particles of the air.

Thus, a grain of sand is buoyant in wind, but a large stone is not; and pebbles and sand are buoyant in water in proportion to their smallness, fine dust taking long to sink, while a large stone sinks at once. Thus, we see that water may be arranged in drops of any magnitude, from the largest rain-drop, about the size of a large pea, to an atom so small as not to be separately visible, the smallest rain passing gradually into mist. Of these drops of different sizes (supposing the strength of the wind the same), the largest fall fastest, the smaller drops are more buoyant, and the small misty rain floats about like a cloud, as often up as down, so that an umbrella is useless in it; though in a heavy thunder-storm, if there is no wind, one may stand gathered up under an umbrella without a drop touching the feet.

Secondly, buoyancy depends on the amount of surface which a given weight of the substance exposes to the resistance of the substance it floats in. Thus, gold-leaf is in a high degree buoyant, while the same quantity of gold in a compact grain would fall like a shot; and a feather is buoyant, though the same quantity of animal matter in a compact form would be as heavy as a little stone. A slate blows far from a house-top, while a brick falls vertically, or nearly so.

Has the reader ever considered the relations of commonest forms of volatile substance? The invisible particles which cause the scent of a rose-leaf, how minute, how multitudinous, passing richly away into the air continually! The visible cloud of frankincense—why visible? Is it in consequence of the greater quantity, or larger size of the particles, and how does the heat act in throwing them off in this quantity, or of this size?

Ask the same questions respecting water. It dries, that is, becomes volatile, invisibly, at (any?) temperature. Snow dries, as water does. Under increase of heat, it volatilizes faster, so as to become dimly visible in large mass, as a heat-haze. It reaches boiling-point, then becomes entirely visible. But compress it, so that no air shall get between the watery particles—it is invisible again. At the first issuing from the steam-pipe the steam is transparent; but opaque, or visible, as it diffuses itself. The water is indeed closer, because cooler, in that diffusion; but more air is between its particles. Then this very question of visibility is an endless one, wavering between form of substance and action of light. The clearest (or least visible) stream becomes brightly opaque by more minute division in its foam, and the clearest dew in hoar-frost. Dust, unpercieved in shade, becomes constantly visible in sunbeam; and watery vapor in the atmosphere, which is itself opaque, when there is promise of fine weather, becomes exquisitely transparent; and (questionably) blue, when it is going to rain.

§ 8. Questionably blue: for besides knowing very little about water, we know what, except by courtesy, must, I think, be called Nothing—about air. Is it the watery vapor, or the air itself, which is blue? Are neither blue, but only white, producing blue when seen over dark spaces? If either blue, or white, why, when crimson is their commanded dress, are the most distant clouds crim-

sonest? Clouds close to us may be blue, but far off, golden,—a strange result, if the air is blue. And again, if blue, why are rays that come through large spaces of it red; and that Alp, or anything else that catches far-away light, why colored red at dawn and sunset? No one knows, I believe. It is true that many substances, as opal, are blue, or green, by reflected light, yellow by transmitted; but air, if blue at all, is blue always by transmitted light. I hear of a wonderful solution of nettles, or other unlovely herb, which is green when shallow,—red when deep. Perhaps some day, as the motion of the heavenly bodies by help of an apple, their light by help of a nettle, may be explained to mankind.

§ 9. But farther: these questions of volatility, and visibility, and hue, are all complicated with those of shape. How is a cloud outlined? Granted whatever you choose to ask, concerning its material, or its aspect, its loftiness and luminousness,—how of its limitation? What hews it into a heap, or spins it into a web? Cold is usually shapeless, I suppose, extending over large spaces equally, or with gradual diminution. You cannot have, in the open air, angles, and wedges, and coils, and cliffs of cold. Yet the vapor stops suddenly, sharp and steep as a rock, or thrusts itself across the gates of heaven in likeness of a brazen bar; or braids itself in and out, and across and across, like a tissue of tapestry; or falls into ripples, like sand; or into waving shreds and tongues, as fire. On what anvils and wheels is the vapor pointed, twisted, hammered, whirled, as the potter's clay? By what hands is the incense of the sea built up into domes of marble?

And, lastly, all these questions respecting substance, and aspect, and shape, and line, and division, are involved with others as inscrutable, concerning action. The curves in which clouds move are unknown;—nay, the very method of their motion, or apparent motion, how far it

is by change of place, how far by appearance in one place and vanishing from another. And these questions about movement lead partly far away into high mathematics, where I cannot follow them, and partly into theories concerning electricity and infinite space, where I suppose at present no one can follow them.

What, then, is the use of asking the questions?

For my own part, I enjoy the mystery, and perhaps the reader may. I think he ought. He should not be less grateful for summer rain, or see less beauty in the clouds of morning, because they come to prove him with hard questions; to which, perhaps, if we look close at the heavenly scroll,* we may find also a syllable or two of answer illuminated here and there.

* There is a beautiful passage in *Sartor Resartus* concerning this old Hebrew scroll, in its deeper meanings, and the child's watching it, though long illegible for him, yet "with an eye to the gilding." It signifies in a word or two nearly all that is to be said about clouds.

CHAPTER II.

THE CLOUD-FLOCKS.

§ 1. From the tenor of the foregoing chapter, the reader will, I hope, be prepared to find me, though dogmatic (it is said) upon some occasions, anything rather than dogmatic respecting clouds. I will assume nothing concerning them, beyond the simple fact, that as a floating sediment forms in a saturated liquid, vapor forms in the body of the air; and all that I want the reader to be clear about in the outset is that this vapor floats in and with the wind (as, if you throw any thick coloring matter into a river, it floats with the stream), and that it is not blown before a denser volume of the wind, as a fleece of wool would be.

§ 2. At whatever height they form, clouds may be broadly considered as of two species only, massive and striated. I cannot find a better word than massive, though it is not a good one, for I mean it only to signify a fleecy arrangement in which no *lines* are visible. The fleece may be so bright as to look like flying thistle-down, or so diffused as to show no visible outline at all. Still if it is all of one common texture, like a handful of wool, or a wreath of smoke, I call it massive.

On the other hand, if divided by parallel lines, so as to look more or less like spun-glass, I call it striated. In Plate 69, Fig. 4, the top of the Aiguille Dru (Chamouni) is seen emergent above low striated clouds, with heaped massive cloud beyond. I do not know in the least what causes this striation, except that it depends

on the nature of the cloud, not on the wind. The strongest wind will not throw a cloud, massive by nature, into the linear form. It will toss it about, and tear it to pieces, but not spin it into threads. On the other hand, often without any wind at all, the cloud will spin itself into threads fine as gossamer. These threads are often said to be a prognostic of storm; but they are not produced by storm.

§ 3. In the first volume, we considered all clouds as belonging to three regions, that of the cirrus, the central cloud, and the rain-cloud. It is of course an arrangement more of convenience than of true description, for cirrus clouds sometimes form low as well as high; and rain sometimes falls high as well as low. I will, nevertheless, retain this old arrangement, which is practically as serviceable as any.

Allowing, also, for various exceptions and modifications, these three bodies of clouds may be generally distinguished in our minds thus. The clouds of upper region are for the most part quiet, or seem to be so, owing to their distance. They are formed now of striated, now of massive substance; but always finely divided into large ragged flakes or ponderous heaps. These heaps (cumuli) and flakes, or drifts, present different phenomena, but must be joined in our minds under the head of central cloud. The lower clouds, bearing rain abundantly, are composed partly of striated, partly of massive substance; but may generally be comprehended under the term rain-cloud.

Our business in this chapter, then, is with the upper clouds, which, owing to their quietness and multitude, we may perhaps conveniently think of as the "cloud-flocks." And we have to discover if any laws of beauty attach to them, such as we have seen in mountains or tree-branches.

§ 4. On one of the few mornings of this winter, when

the sky was clear, and one of the far fewer, on which its clearness was visible from the neighborhood of London, —which now entirely loses at least two out of three sunrises, owing to the environing smoke,—the dawn broke beneath a broad field of level purple cloud, under which floated ranks of divided cirri, composed of finely striated vapor.

It was not a sky containing any extraordinary number of these minor clouds; but each was more than usually distinct in separation from its neighbor, and as they showed in nearly pure pale scarlet on the dark purple ground, they were easily to be counted.

§ 5. There were five or six ranks, from the zenith to the horizon; that is to say, three distinct ones, and then two or three more running together, and losing themselves in distance, in the manner roughly shown in Fig. 79. The nearest rank was composed of more than 150 rows of cloud, set obliquely, as in the figure. I counted 150 which was near the mark, and then stopped, lest the light should fail, to count the separate clouds in some of the rows. The average number was 60 in each row, rather more than less.

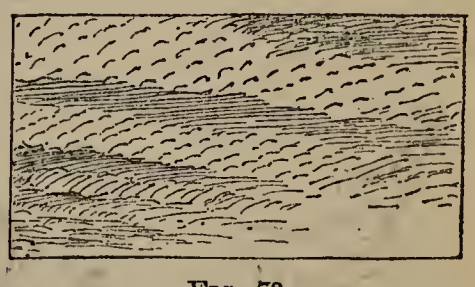


Fig. 79.

There were therefore 150 x 60, that is, 9,000, separate clouds in this one rank, or about 50,000 in the field of sight. Flocks of Admetus under Apollo's keeping. Who else could shepherd such? He by day, dog Sirius by night; or huntress Diana herself—her bright arrows driving away the clouds of prey that would ravage her fair flocks. We must leave fancies, however; these wonderful clouds need close looking at. I will try to draw one or two of them before they fade.

§ 6. On doing which we find, after all, they are not much more like sheep than Canis Major is like a dog.

They resemble more some of our old friends, the pine branches, covered with snow. The three forming the uppermost figure, in the Plate opposite, are as like three of the fifty thousand as I could get them, complex enough in structure, even this single group. Busy workers they must be, that twine the braiding of them all to the horizon, and down beyond it.

Fig. 80.

And who are these workers? You have two questions here, both difficult. What separates these thousands of clouds each from the other, and each about equally from the other? How can they be drawn asunder, yet not allowed to part? Looped lace as it were, richest point —invisible threads fastening embroidered cloud to cloud —the "plighted clouds" of Milton,—creatures of the element—

> "That in the colors of the rainbow live
> And play in the plighted clouds."

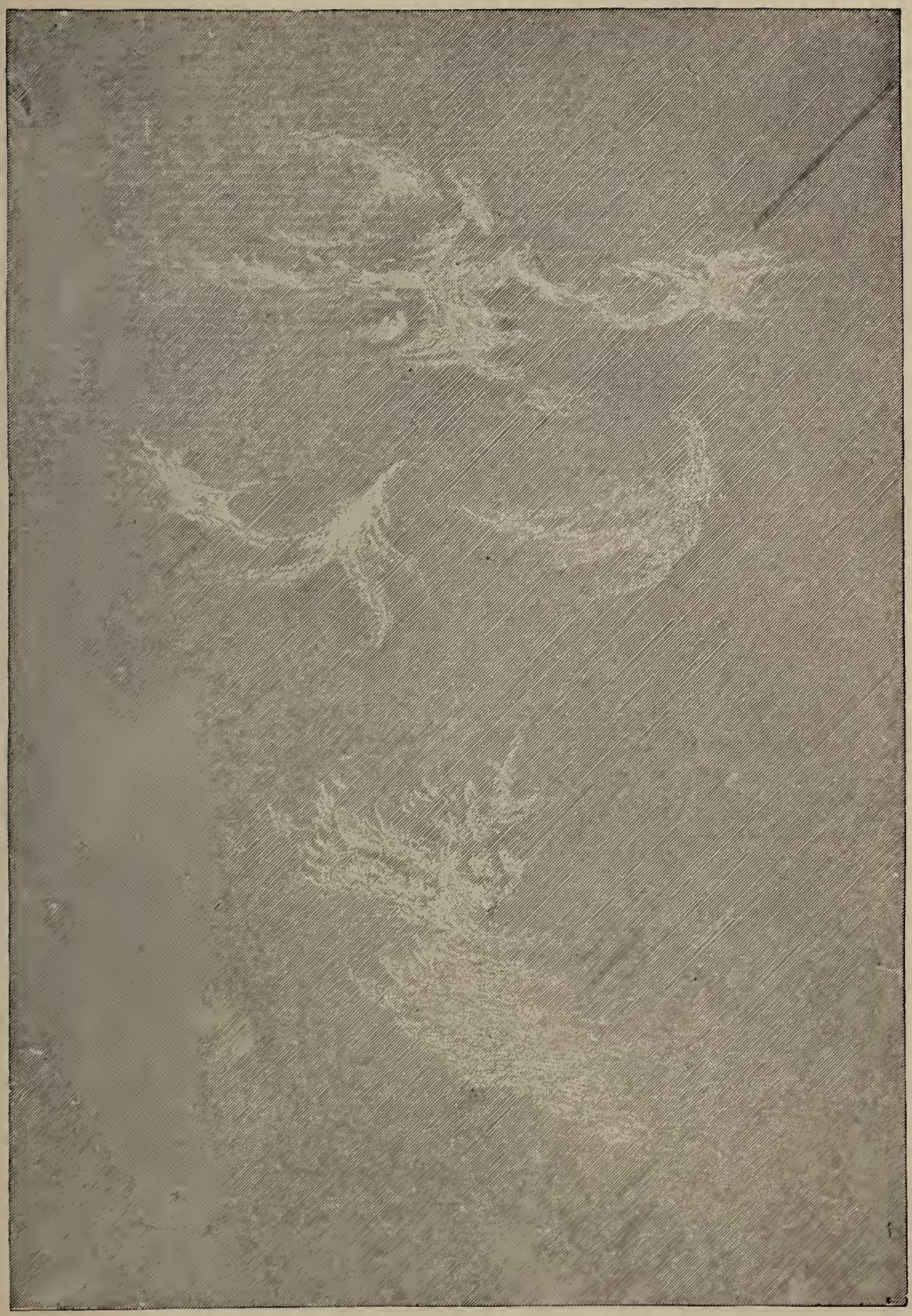


PLATE LXIV.—THE CLOUD-FLOCKS.

Compare Geraldine dressing :—

> "Puts on her silken vestments white,
> And tricks her hair in lovely plight."

And Britomart's—

> "Her well-plighted frock
> She low let fall, that flowed from her lank side
> Down to her foot, with careless modesty."

And, secondly, what bends each of them into these flame-like curves, tender and various, as motions of a bird, hither and thither? Perhaps you may hardly see the curves well in the softly finished forms; here they are plainer in rude outline, Fig. 80.*

* Before going farther, I must say a word or two respecting method of drawing clouds.

Absolutely well no cloud *can* be drawn with the point; nothing but the most delicate management of the brush will express its variety of edge and texture. By laborious and tender engraving, a close approximation may be obtained either to nature or to good painting; and the engravings of sky by our modern line engravers are often admirable;—in many respects as good as can be, and to my mind the best part of their work. There still exists some early proofs of Miller's plate of the Grand Canal, Venice, in which the sky is the likest thing to Turner's work I have ever seen in large engravings. The plate was spoiled after a few impressions were taken off by desire of the publisher. The sky was so exactly like Turner's that he thought it would not please the public, and had all the fine cloud-drawing rubbed away to make it soft.

The Plate opposite page 161, by Mr. Armytage, is also, I think, a superb specimen of engraving, though in result not so good as the one just spoken of, because this was done from my copy of Turner's sky, not from the picture itself.

But engraving of this finished kind cannot, by reason of its costliness, be given for every illustration of cloud form. Nor, if it could, can skies be sketched with the completion which would bear it. It is sometimes possible to draw one cloud out of fifty thousand with something like fidelity before it fades. But if we want the arrangement of the fifty thousand, they can only be indicated with the rudest lines, and finished from memory. It was, as we shall see

§ 7. What is it that throws them into these lines? Eddies of wind?

Nay, an eddy of wind will not stay quiet for three minutes, as that cloud did to be drawn; as all the others did, each in his place. You see there is perfect harmony among the curves. They all flow into each other as the currents of a stream do. If you throw dust that will float on the surface of a slow river, it will arrange itself in lines somewhat like these. To a certain extent, indeed, it is true that there are gentle currents of

presently, only by his gigantic powers of memory that Turner was enabled to draw skies as he did.

Now, I look upon my own memory of clouds, or of anything else, as of no value whatever. All the drawings on which I have ever rested an assertion have been made without stirring from the spot; and in sketching clouds from nature, it is very seldom desirable to use the brush. For broad effects and notes of color (though these, hastily made, are always inaccurate, and letters indicating the color do nearly as well) the brush may be sometimes useful, but, in most cases, a dark pencil, which will lay shade with its side and draw lines with its point, is the best instrument. Turner almost always outlined merely with the point, being able to remember the relations of shade without the slightest chance of error. The point, at all events, is needful, however much stump work may be added to it.

Now, in translating sketches made with the pencil point into engraving, we must either engrave delicately and expensively, or be content to substitute for the soft varied pencil lines the finer and uncloudlike touches of the pen. It is best to do this boldly, if at all, and without the least aim at fineness of effect, to lay down a vigorous black line as the limit of the cloud form or action. The more subtle a painter's finished work, the more fearless he is in using the vigorous black line when he is making memoranda, or treating his subject conventionally. At the top of page 275 Vol. IV., the reader may see the kind of outline which Titian uses for clouds in his pen work. Usually he is even bolder and coarser. And in the rude woodcuts I am going to employ here, I believe the reader will find ultimately that, with whatever ill success used by me, the means of expression are the fullest and most convenient that can be adopted, short of finished engraving, while there are some conditions of cloud-action which I satisfy myself better in expressing by these coarse lines than in any other way.

change in the atmosphere, which move slowly enough to permit in the clouds that follow them some appearance of stability. But how to obtain change so complex in an infinite number of consecutive spaces;—fifty thousand separate groups of current in half of a morning sky, with quiet invisible vapor between, or none—and yet all obedient to one ruling law, gone forth through their companies;—each marshalled to their white standards, in great unity of warlike march, unarrested, unconfused? "One shall not thrust another, they shall walk every one in his own path."

§ 8. These questions occur, at first sight, respecting every group of cirrus cloud. Whatever the form may be, whether branched, as in this instance, or merely rippled, or thrown into shield-like segments, as in Fig. 81—a frequent arrangement—there is still the same difficulty in accounting satisfactorily for the individual forces which regulate the similar shape of each mass, while all are moved by a general force that has apparently no influence on the divided structure. Thus the mass of clouds disposed as in Fig. 81, will probably move, mutually, in the direction of the arrow; that is to say, sideways, as far as their separate curvature is concerned. I suppose it probable that as the science of electricity is more perfectly systematized, the explanation of many circumstances of cloud-form will be rendered by it. At present I see no use in troubling the reader or myself with conjectures which a year's progress in science might

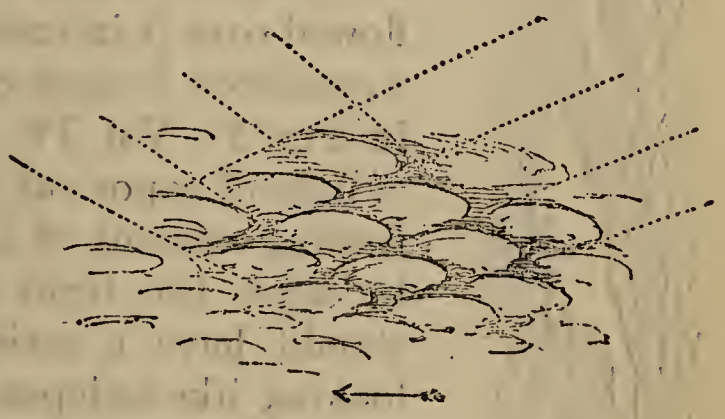


FIG. 81.

FIG. 82.

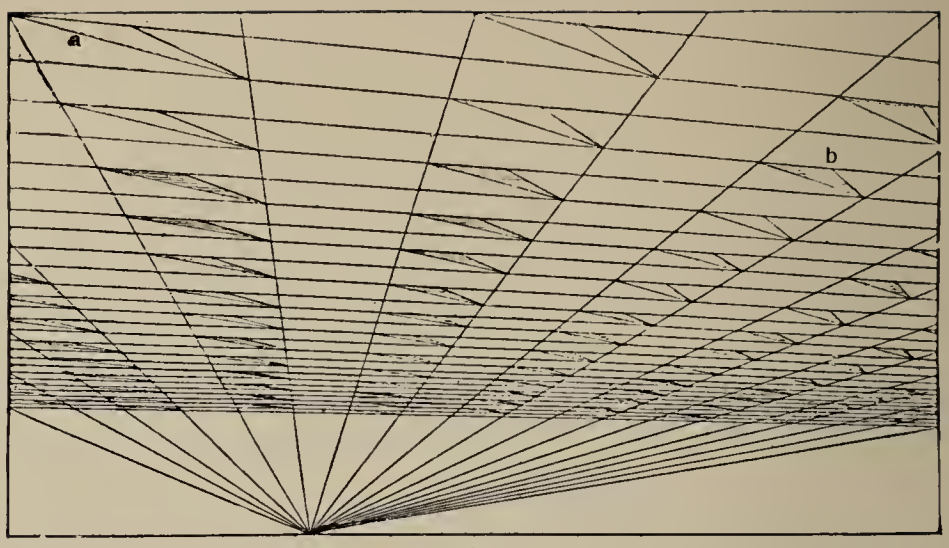
either effectively contradict or supersede. All that I want is, that we should have our questions ready to put clearly to the electricians when the electricians are ready to answer us.

§ 9. It is possible that some of the loveliest conditions of these parallel clouds may be owing to a structure which I forgot to explain, when it occurred in rocks, in the course of the last volume.

When they are finely stratified, and their surfaces abraded by broad, shallow furrows, the edges of the beds, of course, are thrown into undulations, and at some distance, where the furrows disappear, the surface looks as if the rock had flowed over it in successive waves. Such a condition is seen on the left at the top in Fig. 17, Vol. IV. Supposing a series of beds of vapor cut across by a straight sloping current of air, and so placed as to catch the light on their edges, we should have a series of curved lights, looking like independent clouds.

§ 10. I believe conditions of form like those in Fig. 82 (turn the book with its outer edge down) may not unfrequently be thus, owing to stratification, when they occur in the nearer sky. This line of cloud is far off at the horizon, drifting towards the left (the points of course forward), and is, I suppose, a series of nearly circular eddies seen in perspective.

Which question of perspective we must examine a little before going a step farther. In order to simplify it, let us assume that the under surfaces of



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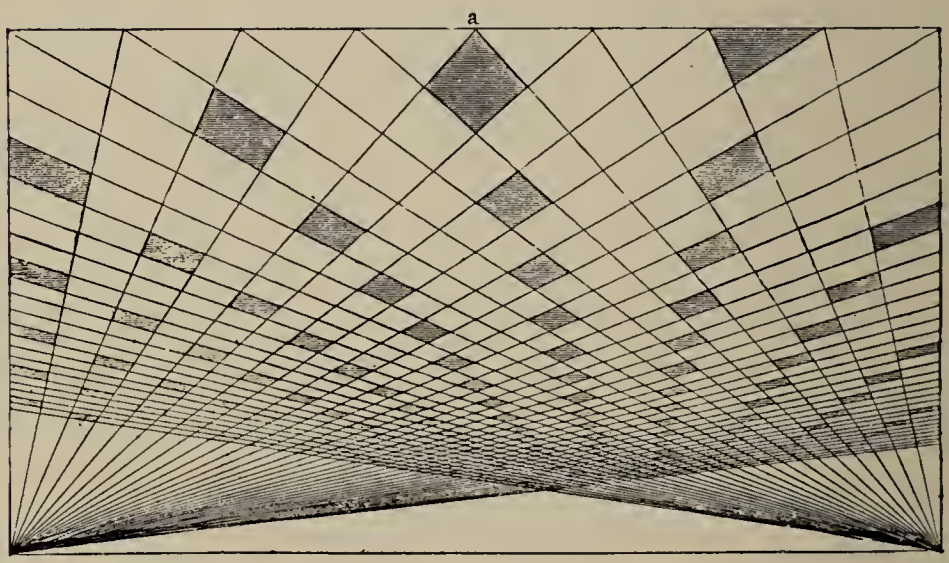

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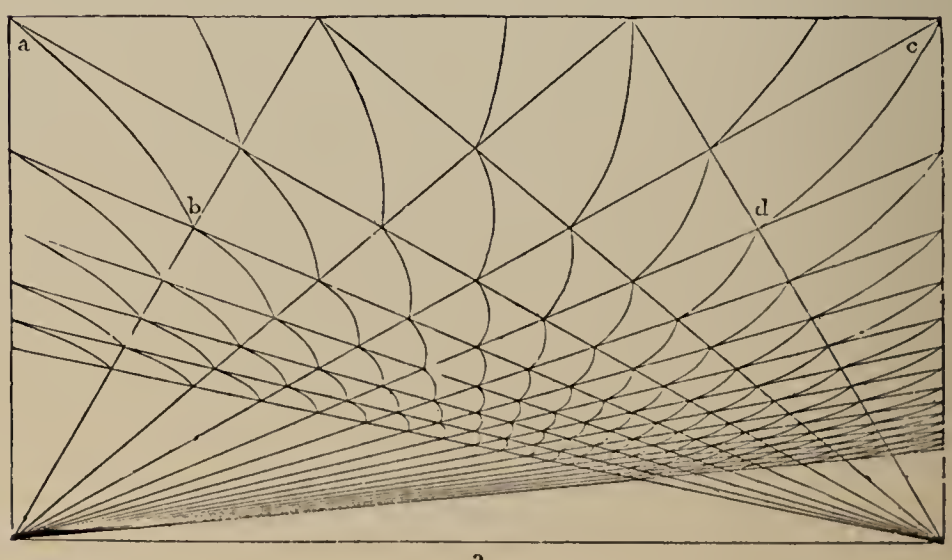


3

PLATE LXV.—CLOUD PERSPECTIVE. RECTILINEAR.

clouds are flat, and lie in a horizontal extended field. This is in great measure the fact, and notable perspective phenomena depend on the approximation of clouds to such a condition.

§ 11. Referring the reader to my Elements of Perspective for statements of law which would be in this place tiresome, I can only ask him to take my word for it that the three figures in Plate 65 represent limiting lines of sky perspective, as they would appear over a large space of the sky. Supposing that the breadth included was one-fourth of the horizon, the shaded portions in the central figure represent square fields of cloud,* and those in the uppermost figure narrow triangles, with their shortest side next us, but sloping a little away from us.

In each figure, the shaded portions show the perspective limits of cloud-masses, which, in reality, are arranged in perfectly straight lines, are all similar, and are equidistant from each other. Their exact relative positions are marked by the lines connecting them, and may be determined by the reader if he knows perspective. If he does not, he may be surprised at first to be told that the stubborn and blunt little triangle, *b*, Fig. 1, Plate 65, represents a cloud precisely similar, and similarly situated, to that represented by the thin triangle, *a*; and, in like manner, the stout diamond, *a*, Fig. 2, represents precisely the same form and size of cloud as the thin strip at *b*. He may perhaps think it still more curious that the retiring perspective which causes stoutness in the triangle, causes leanness in the diamond.†

* If the figures are supposed to include less than one-fourth of the horizon, the shaded figures represent diamond-shaped clouds; but the reader cannot understand this without studying perspective laws accurately.

† In reality, the retiring ranks of cloud, if long enough, would, of course, go on converging to the horizon. I do not continue them, because the figures would become too compressed.

§ 12. Still greater confusion in aspect is induced by the apparent change caused by perspective in the direction of the wind. If Fig. 3 be supposed to include a quarter of the horizon, the spaces, into which its straight lines divide it, represent squares of sky. The curved lines, which cross these spaces from corner to corner, are precisely parallel throughout; and, therefore, two clouds moving, one on the curved line from *a* to *b*, and the other on the other side, from *c* to *d*, would, in reality, be moving with the same wind, in parallel lines. In Plate 68, which is a sketch of an actual sunset behind Beauvais cathedral (the point of the roof of the apse, a little to the left of the centre, shows it to be a summer sunset), the white cirri in the high light are all moving eastward, away from the sun, in perfectly parallel lines, curving a little round to the south. Underneath, are two straight ranks of rainy cirri, crossing each other; one directed south-east; the other, north-west. The meeting perspective of these, in extreme distance, determines the shape of the angular light which opens above the cathedral. Underneath all, fragments of true rain-cloud are floating between us and the sun, governed by curves of their own. They are, nevertheless, connected with the straight cirri, by the dark semi-cumulus in the middle of the shade above the cathedral.

§ 13. Sky perspective, however, remains perfectly simple, so long as it can be reduced to any rectilinear arrangement; but when nearly the whole system is curved, which nine times out of ten is the case, it becomes embarrassing. The central figure in Plate 66 represents the simplest possible combination of perspective of straight lines with that of curves, a group of concentric circles of small clouds being supposed to cast shadows from the sun near the horizon. Such shadows are often cast in misty air; the aspect of rays about the sun being, in fact, only caused by spaces between them.

Fig. 83.

They are carried out formally and far in the Plate, to show how curiously they may modify the arrangement of light in a sky. The woodcut, Fig. 83, gives roughly the arrangement of the clouds in Turner's Pools of Solomon, in which he has employed a concentric system of circles of this kind, and thus lighted. In the perspective figure the clouds are represented as small square masses, for the sake of greater simplicity, and are so beaded or strung as it were on the curves in which

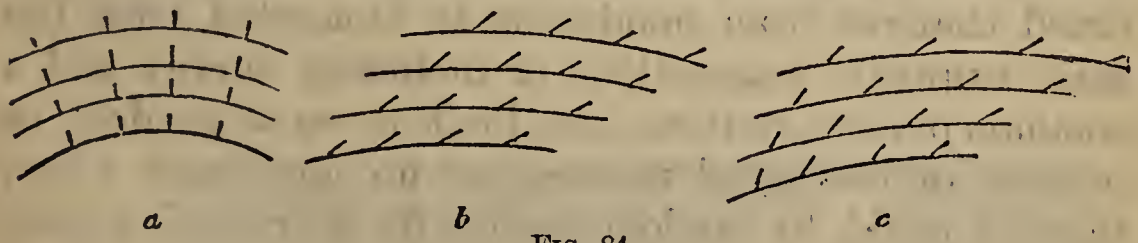


Fig. 84.

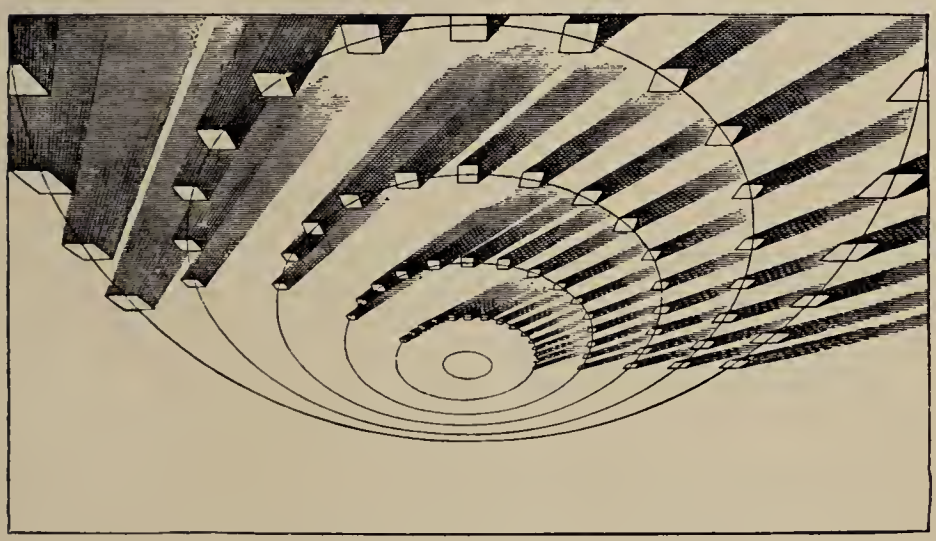
they move, as to keep their distances precisely equal, and their sides parallel. This is the usual condition of cloud: for though arranged in curved ranks, each cloud has its face to the front, or, at all events, acts in some parallel line—generally another curve—with those next to it; being rarely, except in the form of fine radiating striæ, arranged on the curves as at *a*, Fig. 84; but as at

b, or *c*. It would make the diagram too complex if I gave one of intersecting curves; but the lowest figure in Plate 66 represents, in perspective, two groups of ellipses arranged in equidistant straight and parallel lines, and following each other on two circular curves. Their exact relative position is shown in Fig. 2, Plate 57. While the uppermost figure in Plate 66 represents, in parallel perspective, a series of ellipses arranged in radiation on a circle, their exact relative size and position are shown in Fig. 3, Plate 57, and the lines of such a sky as would be produced by them, roughly, in Fig. 90, facing page 171.*

§ 14. And in these figures, which, if we look up the subject rightly, would be but the first and simplest of the series necessary to illustrate the action of the upper cirri, the reader may see, at once, how necessarily painters, untrained in observance of proportion, and ignorant of perspective, must lose in every touch the expression of buoyancy and space in sky. The absolute forms of each cloud are, indeed, not alike, as the ellipses in the engraving; but assuredly, when moving in groups of this kind, there are among them the same proportioned inequalities of relative distance, the same gradated changes from ponderous to elongated form, the same exquisite suggestions of including curve; and a common painter, dotting his clouds down at random, or in more or less equal masses, can no more paint a sky, than he could, by random dashes for its ruined arches, paint the Coliseum.

§ 15. Whatever approximation to the character of upper clouds may have been reached by some of our mod-

* I use ellipses in order to make these figures easily intelligible; the curves actually *are* variable curves, of the nature of the cycloid, or other curves of continuous motion; probably produced by a current moving in some such direction as that indicated by the dotted line in Fig. 3, Plate 57.



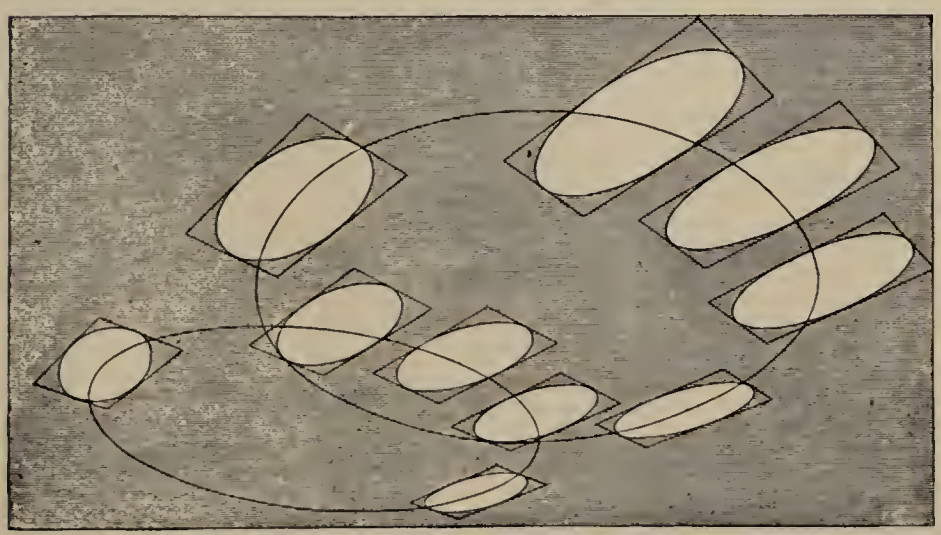


PLATE LXVI.—CLOUD PERSPECTIVE. CURVILINEAR.

Fig. 85.

ern students, it will be found, on careful analysis, that Turner stands more absolutely alone in this gift of cloud-drawing, than in any other of his great powers. Observe, I say, cloud-*drawing;* other great men colored clouds beautifully; none but he ever drew them truly: this power coming from his constant habit of drawing skies, like everything else, with the pencil point. It is quite impossible to engrave any of his large finished skies on a small scale; but the woodcut, Fig. 85, will give some idea of the forms of cloud involved in one of his small drawings. It is only half of the sky in question, that of Rouen from St. Catherine's Hill, in the Rivers of France. Its clouds are arranged on two systems of intersecting circles, crossed beneath by long bars very slightly bent. The form of every separate cloud is completely studied; the manner of drawing them will be understood better by help of the Plate opposite which is a piece of the sky above the "Campo Santo," * at Venice, exhibited in 1842. It is exquisite in rounding of the separate fragments and buoyancy of the rising central group, as well as in its expression of the wayward influence of curved lines of breeze on a generally rectilinear system of cloud.

§ 16. To follow the subject farther would, however, lead us into doctrine of circular storms, and all kinds of pleasant, but infinite, difficulty, from which temptation I keep clear, believing that enough is now stated to enable the reader to understand what he is to look for in Turner's skies; and what kind of power, thought, and science are involved continually in the little white or purple dashes of cloud-spray, which, in such pictures as the San Benedetto, looking to Fusina, the Napoleon, or the Téméraire, guide the eye to the horizon more by their true perspective than by their aërial tone, and are

* Now in the possession of E. Bicknell, Esq., who kindly lent me the picture, that I might make this drawing from it carefully.

buoyant, not so much by expression of lightness as of motion.*

§ 17. I say the "white or purple" cloud-spray. One word yet may be permitted me respecting the mystery of that color. What should we have thought—if we had lived in a country where there were no clouds, but only low mist or fog—of any stranger who had told us that, in his country, these mists rose into the air, and became purple, crimson, scarlet, and gold? I am aware of no sufficient explanation of these hues of the upper clouds, nor of their strange mingling of opacity with a power of absorbing light. All clouds are so opaque that, however delicate they may be, you never see one through another. Six feet depth of them, at a little distance, will wholly veil the darkest mountain edge; so that, whether for light or shade, they tell upon the sky as body color on canvas; they have always a perfect surface and bloom;—delicate as a rose-leaf, when required of them, but never poor or meagre in hue, like old-fashioned water-colors. And, if needed, in mass, they will bear themselves for solid force of hue against any rock. Facing p. 425, I have engraved a memorandum made of a clear sunset after rain, from the top of Milan cathedral. The greater part of the outline is granite. Monte Rosa—the rest cloud; but it and the granite were dark alike. Frequently, in effects of this kind, the cloud is darker of the two.†

* I cannot yet engrave these; but the little study of a single rank of cirrus, the lowest in Plate 64, may serve to show the value of perspective in expressing buoyancy. It is not, however, though beatifully engraved by Mr. Armytage, as delicate as it should be, in the finer threads which indicate increasing distance at the extremity. Compare the rising of the lines of curve at the edges of this mass, with the similar action on a larger scale, of Turner's cloud, opposite.

† In the autobiography of John Newton there is an interesting account of the deception of a whole ship's company by cloud, taking the aspect and outline of mountainous land. They ate the last provision in the ship, so sure were they of its being land, and were nearly starved to death in consequence.

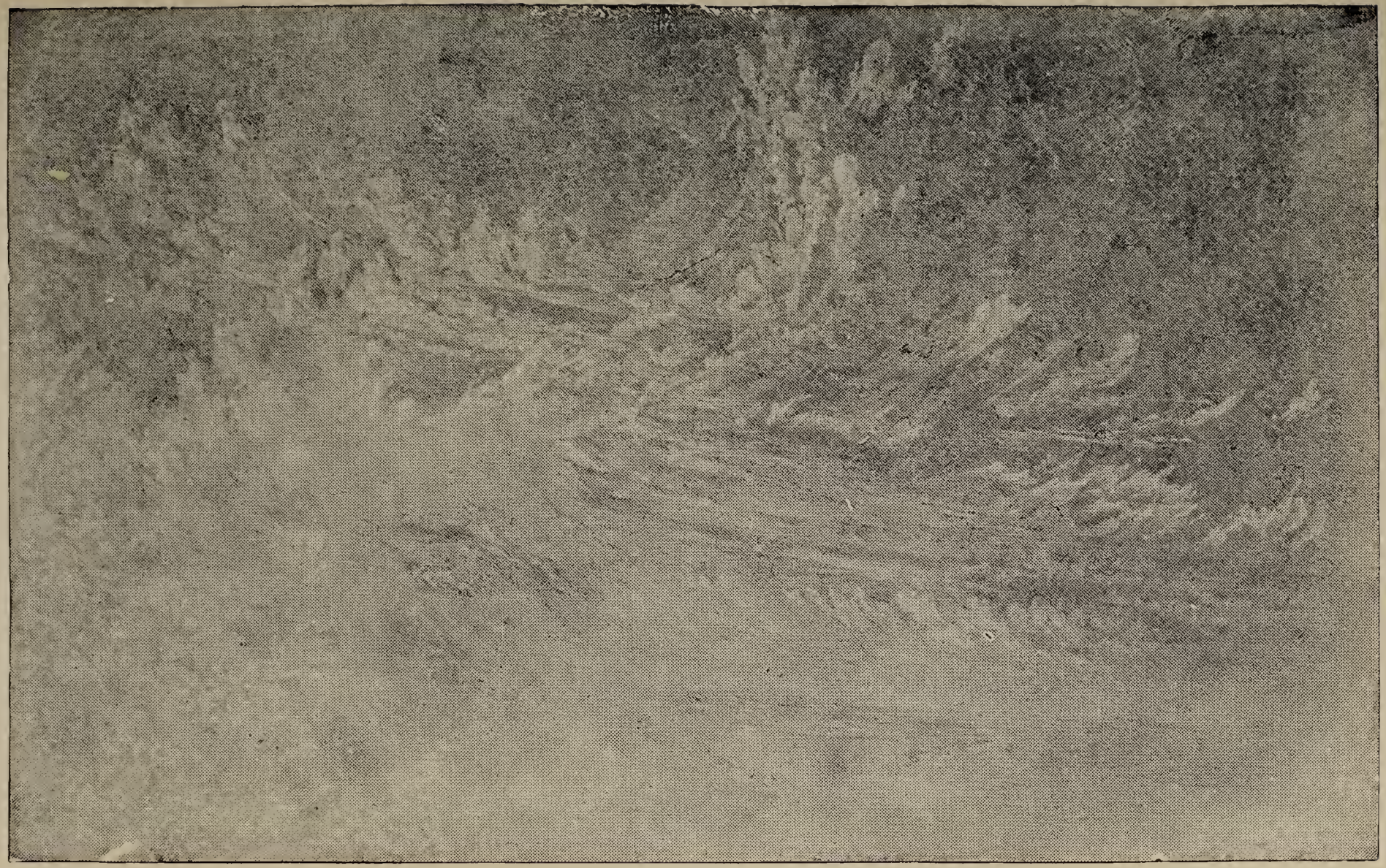


PLATE LXVII.—CLOUDS.

And this opacity is, nevertheless, obtained without destroying the gift they have of letting broken light through them, so that, between us and the sun, they may become golden fleeces, and float as fields of light.

Now their distant colors depend on these two properties together; partly on the opacity, which enables them to reflect light strongly; partly on a spongelike power of gathering light into their bodies.

§ 18. Long ago it was noted by Aristotle, and again by Leonardo, that vaporous bodies looked russet, or even red, when warm light was seen through them, and blue when deep shade was seen through them. Both colors may, generally, be seen on any wreath of cottage smoke.

Whereon, easy conclusion has sometimes been founded by modern reasoners. All red in sky is caused by light seen through vapor, and all blue by shade seen through vapor.

Easy, indeed, but not sure, even in cloud-color only. It is true that the smoke of a town may be of a rich brick red against golden twilight; and of a very lovely, though not bright, blue against shade. But I never saw crimson or scarlet smoke, nor ultramarine smoke.

Even granting that watery vapor in its purity may give the colors more clearly, the red colors are by no means always relieved against light. The finest scarlets are constantly seen in broken flakes on a deep purple ground of heavier cloud beyond, and some of the loveliest rose-colors on clouds in the east, opposite the sunset, or in the west in the morning. Nor are blues always attainable by throwing vapor over shade. Especially, you cannot get them by putting it over blue itself. A thin vapor on dark blue sky is of a warm gray, not blue. A thunder-cloud, deep enough to conceal everything behind it, is often dark lead-color, or sulphurous blue; but the thin vapors crossing it, milky-white. The vividest hues are connected also with another attribute of clouds, their

lustre—metallic in effect, watery in reality. They not only reflect color as dust or wool would, but, when far off, as water would; sometimes even giving a distinct image of the sun underneath the orb itself;—in all cases becoming dazzling in lustre, when at a low angle, capable of strong reflection. Practically, this low angle is only obtained when the cloud seems near the sun, and hence we get into the careless habit of looking at the golden reflected light as if it were actually caused by nearness to the fiery ball.

§ 19. Without, however, troubling ourselves at all about laws, or causes of color, the visible consequences of their operation are notably these—that when near us, clouds present only subdued and uncertain colors; but when far from us, and struck by the sun on their under surfaces—so that the greater part of the light they receive is reflected—they may become golden, purple, scarlet, and intense fiery white, mingled in all kinds of gradations, such as I tried to describe in the chapter on the upper clouds in the first volume, in hope of being able to return to them "when we knew what was beautiful."

The question before us now is, therefore, What value ought this attribute of clouds to possess in the human mind? Ought we to admire their colors, or despise them? Is it well to watch them as Turner does, and strive to paint them through all deficiency and darkness of inadequate material? Or, is it wiser and nobler—like Claude, Salvator, Ruysdael, Wouvermans—never to look for them—never to portray? We must yet have patience a little before deciding this, because we have to ascertain some facts respecting the typical meaning of color itself; which, reserving for another place, let us proceed here to learn the forms of the inferior clouds.

PLATE LXVIII.—LIGHT IN THE WEST. BEAUVAIS.

CHAPTER III.

THE CLOUD-CHARIOTS.

§ 1. Between the flocks of small countless clouds which occupy the highest heavens, and the gray undivided film of the true rain-cloud, form the fixed masses or torn fleeces, sometimes collected and calm, sometimes fiercely drifting, which are, nevertheless, known under one general name of cumulus, or heaped cloud.

The true cumulus, the most majestic of all clouds, and almost the only one which attracts the notice of ordinary observers, is for the most part windless; the movement of its masses being solemn, continuous, inexplicable, a steady advance or retiring, as if they were animated by an inner will, or compelled by an unseen power. They appear to be peculiarly connected with heat, forming perfectly only in the afternoon, and melting away in the evening. Their noblest conditions are strongly electric, and connect themselves with storm-cloud and true thunder-cloud. When there is thunder in the air, they will form in cold weather, or early in the day.

§ 2. I have never succeeded in drawing a cumulus. Its divisions of surface are grotesque and endless, as those of a mountain; perfectly defined, brilliant beyond all power of color, and transitory as a dream. Even Turner never attempted to paint them, any more than he did the snows of the high Alps.

Nor can I explain them any more than I can draw them. The ordinary account given of their structure is, I believe, that the moisture raised from the earth by the

sun's heat becomes visible by condensation at a certain height in the colder air, that the level of the condensing point is that of the cloud's base, and that above it, the heaps are pushed up higher and higher as more vapor accumulates, till, towards evening, the supply beneath ceases; and at sunset, the fall of dew enables the surrounding atmosphere to absorb and melt them away. Very plausible. But it seems to me herein unexplained how the vapor is held together in those heaps. If the clear air about and above it has no aqueous vapor in it, or at least a much less quantity, why does not the clear air keep pulling the cloud to pieces, eating it away, as steam is consumed in open air? Or, if any cause prevents such rapid devouring of it, why does not the aqueous vapor diffuse itself softly in the air like smoke, so that one would not know where the cloud ended? What should make it bind itself in those solid mounds, and stay so:—positive, fantastic, defiant, determined?

§ 3. If ever I am able to understand the process of the cumulus formation,* it will become to me one of the most interesting of all subjects of study to trace the connection of the threatening and terrible outlines of thunder-cloud with the increased action of the electric power. I am for the present utterly unable to speak respecting this matter, and must pass it by, in all humility, to say what little I have ascertained respecting the more broken and rapidly moving forms of the central clouds, which connect themselves with mountains, and may, therefore, among mountains, be seen close and truly.

§ 4. Yet even of these, I can only reason with great doubt and continual pause. This last volume ought

* One of the great difficulties in doing this is to distinguish the portions of cloud outline which really slope upwards from those which only appear to do so, being in reality horizontal, and thrown into apparent inclination by perspective.

certainly to be better than the first of the series, for two reasons. I have learned, during the sixteen years, to say little where I said much, and to see difficulties where I saw none. And I am in a great state of marvel in looking back to my first account of clouds, not only at myself, but even at my dear master, M. de Saussure. To think that both of us should have looked at drifting mountain clouds, for years together, and been content with the theory which you will find set forth in § 4, of the chapter on the central cloud region (Vol. I.), respecting the action of the snowy summits and watery vapor passing them. It is quite true that this action takes place, and that the said fourth paragraph is right, as far as it reaches. But both Saussure and I ought to have known—we both did know, but did not think of it—that the covering or cap-cloud forms on hot summits as well as cold ones;—that the red and bare rocks of Mont Pilate, hotter, certainly, after a day's sunshine than the cold storm-wind which sweeps to them from the Alps, nevertheless have been renowned for their helmet of cloud, ever since the Romans watched the cloven summit, gray against the south, from the ramparts of Vindonissa, giving it the name from which the good Catholics of Lucerne have warped out their favorite piece of terrific sacred biography.* And both my master and I should also have reflected, that if our theory about its formation had been generally true, the helmet cloud ought to form on every cold summit, at the approach of rain, in approximating proportions to the bulk of the glaciers; which is so far from being the case that not only (A) the cap-cloud may often be seen on lower summits of grass or rock, while the higher ones are splendidly clear (which may be accounted for

* *Pileatus*, capped (strictly speaking, with the cap of liberty;—stormy cloud enough sometimes on men's brows as well as on mountains), corrupted into Pilatus, and Pilate.

by supposing the wind containing the moisture not to have risen so high), but (B) the cap-cloud always shows a preference for hills of a conical form, such as the Mole or Niesen, which can have very little power in chilling the air, even supposing they were cold themselves, while it will entirely refuse to form round huge masses of mountain, which, supposing them of chilly temperament, must have discomforted the atmosphere in their neighborhood for leagues. And finally (C) reversing the principle under letter A, the cap-cloud constantly forms on the summit of Mont Blanc, while it will obstinately refuse to appear on the Dome du Goûte or Aiguille Sans-nom, where the snowfields are of greater extent, and the air must be moister, because lower.

§ 5. The fact is, that the explanation given in that fourth paragraph can, in reality, account only for what may properly be termed "lee-side cloud," slightly noticed in the continuation of the same chapter, but deserving most attentive illustration, as one of the most beautiful phenomena of the Alps. When a moist wind blows in clear weather over a cold summit, it has not time to get chilled as it approaches the rock, and therefore the air remains clear, and the sky bright on the windward side; but under the lee of the peak, there is partly a back eddy, and partly still air; and in that lull and eddy the wind gets time to be chilled by the rock, and the cloud appears as a boiling mass of white vapor, rising continually with the return current to the upper edge of the mountain, where it is caught by the straight wind, and partly torn, partly melted away in broken frag-

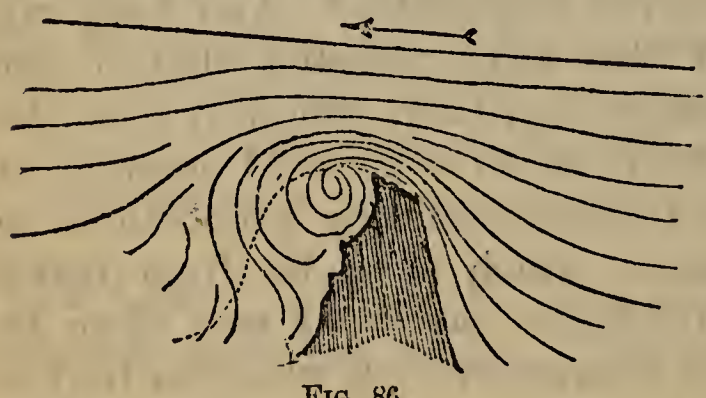
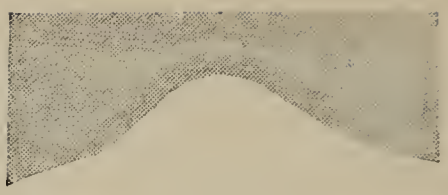
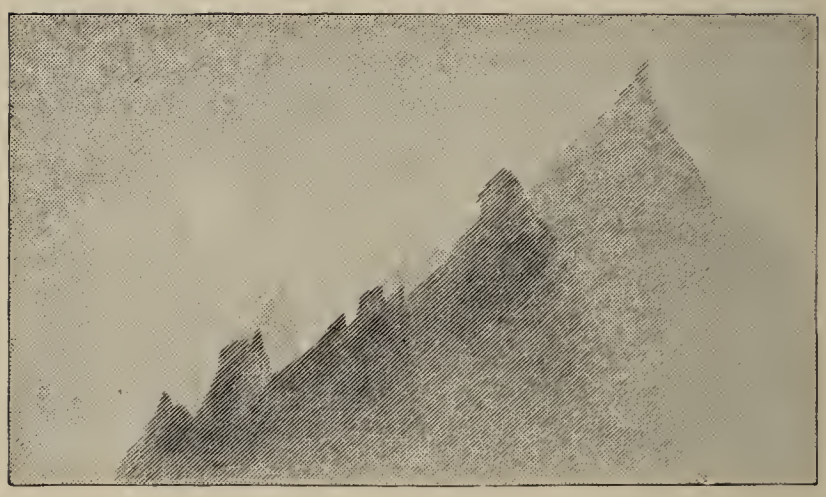


FIG. 86.





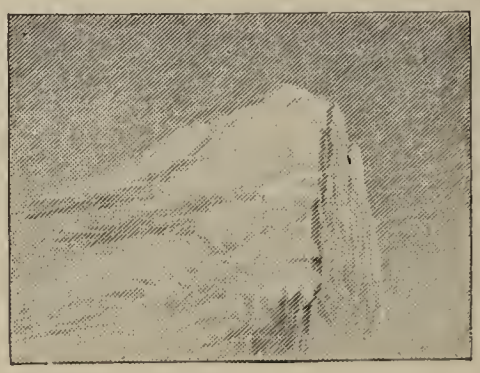


PLATE LXIX.—AIGUILLES AND THEIR FRIENDS.

ments. In Fig. 86 the dark mass represents the mountain peak, the arrow the main direction of the wind, the curved lines show the directions of such current and its concentration, and the dotted lines enclose the space in which cloud forms densely, floating away beyond and above in irregular tongues and flakes. The second figure from the top in Plate 69 represents the actual aspect of it when in full development, with a strong south wind, in a clear day, on the Aiguille Dru, the sky being perfectly blue and lovely around.

So far all is satisfactory. But the true helmet cloud will not allow itself to be thus explained away. The uppermost figure in Plate 69 represents the loveliest form of it, seen in that perfect arch, so far as I know, only over the highest piece of earth in Europe.

§ 6. Respecting which there are two mysteries:—First, why it should form only at a certain distance above the snow, showing blue sky between it and the summit. Secondly, why, so forming, it should always show as an arch, not as a concave cup. This last question puzzles me especially. For, if it be a true arch, and not a cup, it ought to show itself in certain positions of the spectator, or directions of the wind, like the ring of Saturn, as a mere line, or as a spot of cloud pausing over the hill-top. But I never saw it so. While, as above noticed, the lowest form of the helmet cloud is not white as of silver, but like Dolon's helmet of wolf-skin,—it is a gray, flaky veil, lapping itself over the shoulders of a more or less conical peak; and of this, also, I have no word to utter but the old one, "Electricity," and I might as well say nothing.

§ 7. Neither the helmet cloud, nor the lee-side cloud, however, though most interesting and beautiful, are of much importance in picturesque effect. They are too isolated and strange. But the great mountain cloud, which seems to be a blending of the two with inde-

pendent forms of vapor (that is to say, a greater development, in consequence of the mountain's action, of clouds which would in some way or other have formed anywhere), requires prolonged attention, as the principal element of the sky in noblest landscape.

§ 8. For which purpose, first, it may be well to clear a few clouds out of the way. I believe the true cumulus is never seen in a great mountain region, at least never associated with hills. It is always broken up and modified by them. Boiling and rounded masses of vapor occur continually, as behind the Aiguille Dru (lowest figure in Plate 69); but the quiet, thoroughly defined, infinitely divided and modelled pyramid never develops itself. It would be very grand if one ever saw a great mountain peak breaking through the domed shoulders of a true cumulus; but this I have never seen.

§ 9. Again, the true high cirri never cross a mountain in Europe. How often have I hoped to see an Alp rising through and above their level-laid and rippled fields! but those white harvest-fields are heaven's own. And, finally, even the low, level, cirrus (used so largely in Martin's pictures) rarely crosses a mountain. If it does, it usually becomes slightly waved or broken, so as to destroy its character. Sometimes, however, at great distances, a very level bar of cloud will strike across a peak; but nearer, too much of the under surface of the field is seen, so that a well-defined bar across a peak, seen at a high angle, is of the greatest rarity.

§ 10. The ordinary mountain cloud, therefore, if well defined, divides itself into two kinds: a broken condition of cumulus, grand in proportion as it is solid and quiet,—and a strange modification of drift-cloud, midway, as I said, between the helmet and the lee-side forms. The broken, quiet cumulus impressed Turner exceedingly when he first saw it on hills. He uses it, slightly exaggerating its definiteness, in all his early studies among

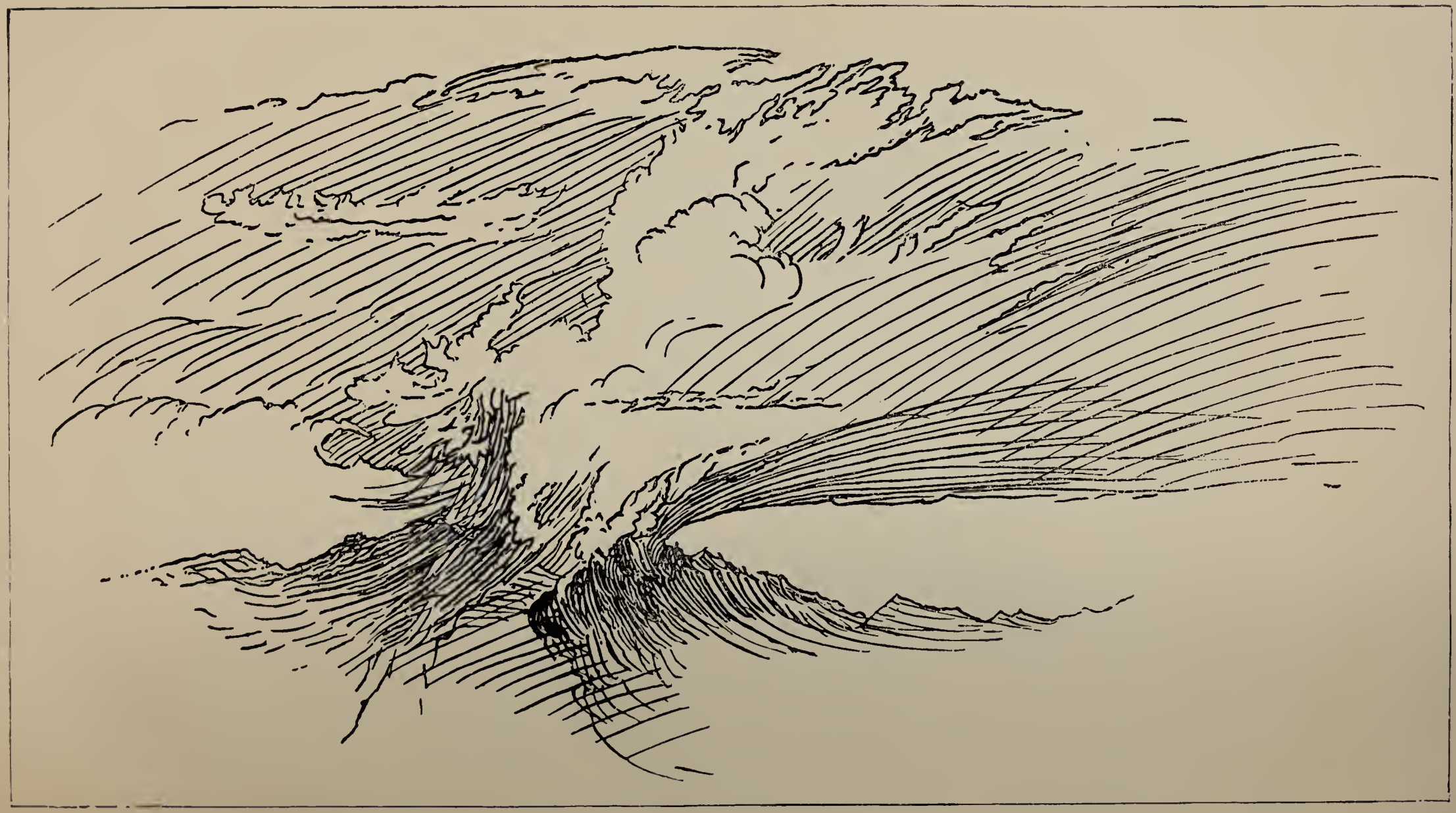


Fig. 87.

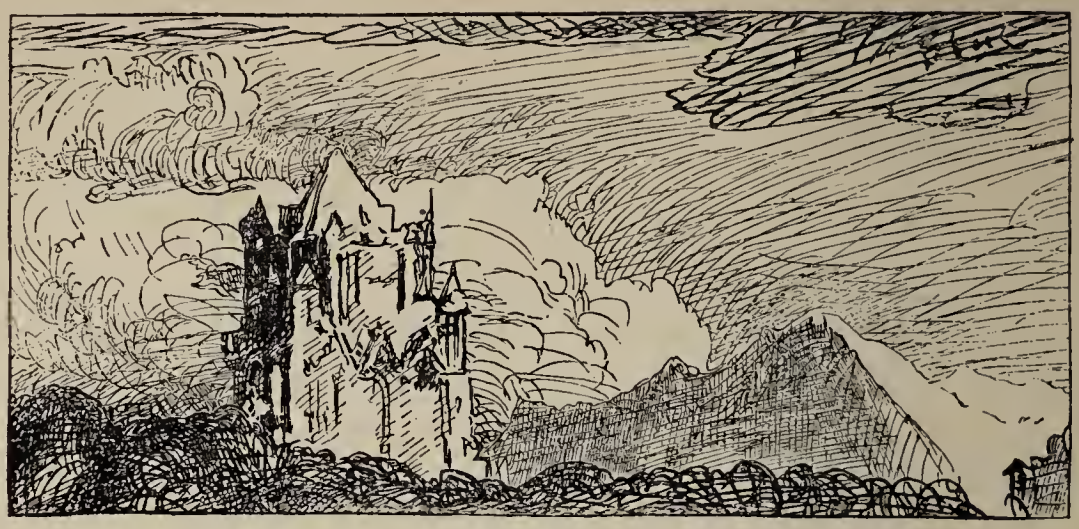


Fig. 88.

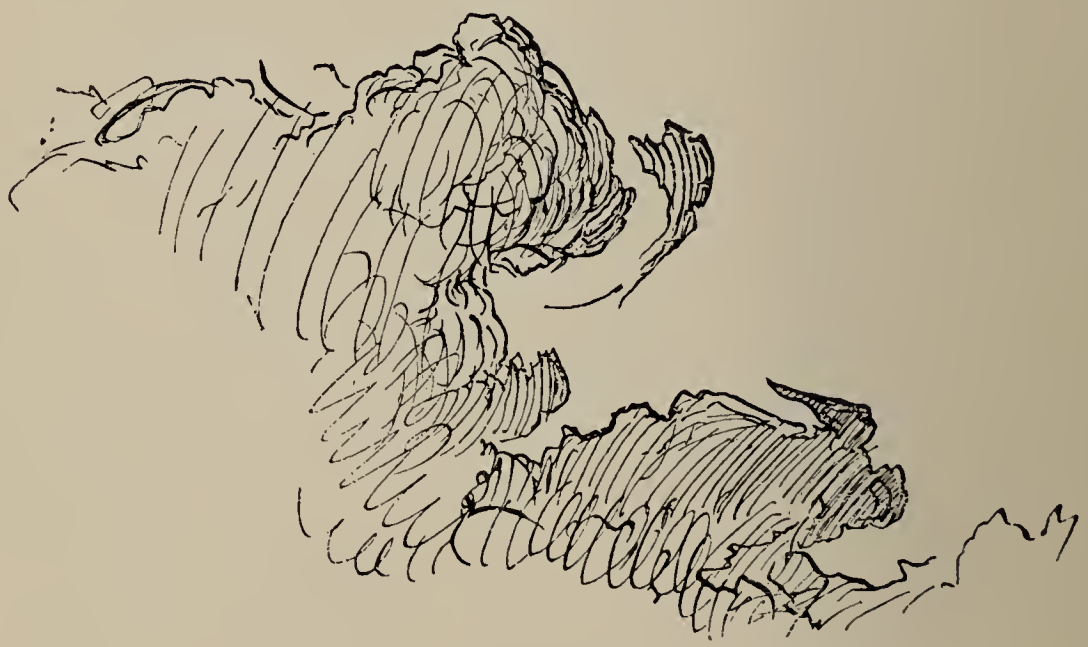


Fig. 89.

Fig. 90.

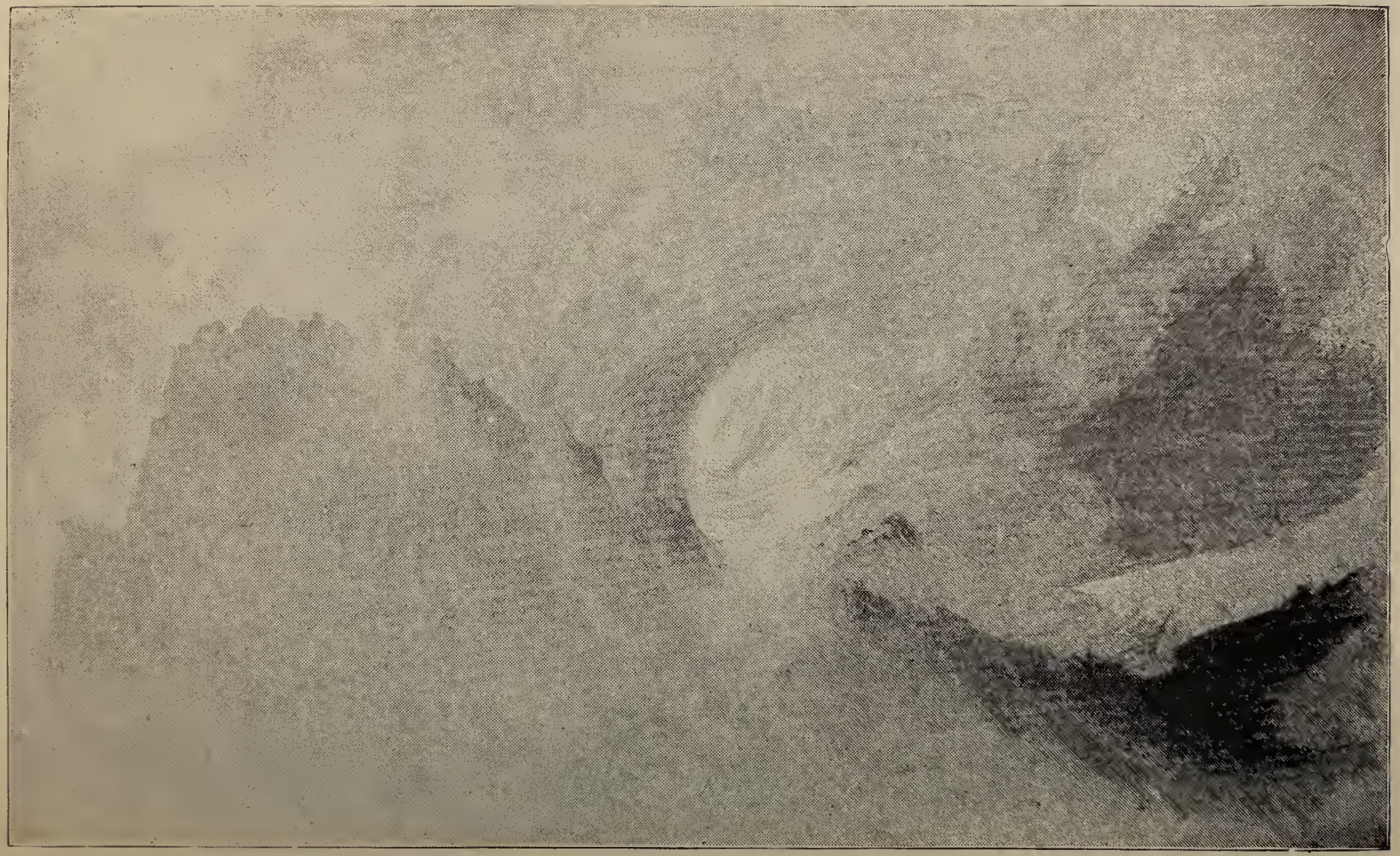


PLATE LXXI.—"VENGA MEDUSA."

the mountains of the Chartreuse, and very beautifully in the vignette of St. Maurice in Rogers's Italy. There is nothing, however, to be specially observed of it, as it only differs from the cumulus of the plains, by being smaller and more broken.

§ 11. Not so the mountain drift-cloud, which is as peculiar as it is majestic. The Plates 70 and 71 show, as well as I can express, two successive phases of it on a mountain crest; (in this instance the great limestone ridge above St. Michel, in Savoy.) But what colossal proportions this noble cloud assumes may be best gathered from the rude sketch, Fig. 87, in which I have simply put firm black ink over the actual pencil lines made at the moment, giving the form of a single wreath of the drift-cloud, stretching about five miles in a direct line from the summit of one of the Alps of the Val d'Aosta, as seen from the plain of Turin. It has a grand volcanic look, but I believe its aspect of rising from the peak to be almost, if not altogether, deceptive; and that the apparently gigantic column is a nearly horizontal stream of lee-side cloud, tapered into the distance by perspective, and thus rising at its apparently lowest but in reality most distant point, from the mountain summit whose shade calls it into being out of the clear winds.

Whether this be so or not, the apparent origin of the cloud on the peak, and radiation from it, distinguish it from the drift-cloud of level country, which arranges itself at the horizon in broken masses, such as Fig. 89, showing no point of origin; and I do not know how far they are vertical cliffs or horizontally extended fields. They are apt to be very precipitous in aspect, breaking into fragments with an apparently concentric motion, as in the figure; but of this motion also—whether vertical or horizontal—I can say nothing positive.

§ 12. The absolute scale of such clouds may be seen, or at least demonstrated, more clearly in Fig. 88, which

is a rough note of an effect of sky behind the tower of Berne Cathedral. It was made from the mound beside the railroad bridge. The Cathedral tower is half-a-mile distant. The great Eiger of Grindelwald is seen just on the right of it. This mountain is distant from the tower thirty-four miles as the crow flies, and ten thousand feet above it in height. The drift-cloud behind it, therefore, being in full light, and showing no overhanging surfaces, must rise at least twenty thousand feet into the air.

§ 13. The extreme whiteness of the volume of vapor in this case (not, I fear, very intelligible in the woodcut *) may be partly owing to recent rain, which, by its evaporation, gives a peculiar density and brightness to some forms of clearing cloud. In order to understand this, we must consider another set of facts. When weather is thoroughly wet among hills, we ought no more to accuse the mountains of forming the clouds, than we do the plains in similar circumstances. The unbroken mist buries the mountains to their bases; but that is not their fault. It may be just as wet and just as cloudy elsewhere. (This is not true of Scottish mountain, by the way.) But when the wet weather is breaking, and the clouds pass, perhaps, in great measure, away from the plains, leaving large spaces of blue sky, the mountains begin to shape clouds for themselves. The fallen moisture evaporates from the plain invisibly; but not so from the hill-side. There, what quantity of rain has not gone down in the torrents, ascends again to heaven instantly

* I could not properly illustrate the subject of clouds without numbers of these rude drawings, which would probably offend the general reader by their coarseness, while the cost of engraving them in facsimile is considerable, and would much add to the price of the book. If I find people at all interested in the subject, I may, perhaps, some day systematize and publish my studies of cloud separately. I am sorry not to have given in this volume a careful study of a rich cirrus sky, but no wood-engraving that I can employ on this scale will express the finer threads and waves.

in white clouds. The storm passes as if it had tormented the crags, and the strong mountains smoke like tired horses.

§ 14. Here is another question for us of some interest. Why does the much greater quantity of moisture lying on the horizontal fields send up no visible vapor, and the less quantity left on the rocks glorify itself into a magnificent wreath of soaring snow?

First, for the very reason than it is less in quantity, and more distributed; as a wet cloth smokes when you put it near the fire, but a basin of water not.

The previous heat of the crags, noticed in the first volume, p. 373, is only a part of the cause. It operates only locally, and on remains of sudden showers. But after any number of days and nights of rain, and in all places exposed to returning sunshine and breezes, the *distribution* of the moisture tells. So soon as the rain has ceased, all water that can run off is of course gone from the steep hill-sides; there remains only the thin adherent film of moisture to be dried; but that film is spread over a complex texture—all manner of crannies, and bosses, and projections, and filaments of moss and lichen, exposing a vast extent of drying surface to the air. And the evaporation is rapid in proportion.

§ 15. Its rapidity, however, observe, does not account for its visibility, and this is one of the questions I cannot clearly solve, unless I were sure of the nature of the vesicular vapor. When our breath becomes visible on a frosty day, it is easily enough understood that the moisture which was invisible, carried by the warm air from the lungs, becomes visible when condensed or precipitated by the surrounding chill; but one does not see why air passing over a moist surface quite as cold as itself should take up one particle of water more than it can conveniently—that is to say, invisibly—carry. Whenever you *see* vapor, you may not inaccurately con-

sider the air as having got more than it can properly

Fig. 91.

hold, and dropping some. Now it is easily understood how it should take up much in the lungs, and let some

of it fall when it is pinched by the frost outside; but why should it overload itself there on the hills, when it is at perfect liberty to fly away as soon as it likes, and come back for more? I do not see my way well in this. I do not see it clearly, even through the wet cloth. I shall leave all the embarrassment of the matter, however, to my reader, contenting myself, as usual, with the actual fact, that the hill-side air does behave in this covetous and unreasonable manner; and that, in consequence, when the weather is breaking (and sometimes, provokingly, when it is not), phantom clouds form and rise in sudden crowds of wild and spectral imagery along all the far succession of the hill-slopes and ravines.

§ 16. There is this distinction, however, between the clouds that form during the rain and after it. In the worst weather, the rain-cloud keeps rather high, and is unbroken; but when there is a disposition in the rain to relax, every now and then a sudden company of white clouds will form quite low down (in Chamouni or Grindelwald, and such high districts, even down to the bottom of the valley), which will remain, perhaps, for ten minutes, filling all the air, then disappear as suddenly as they came, leaving the gray upper cloud and steady rain to their work. These "clouds of relaxation," if we may so call them, are usually flaky and horizontal, sometimes tending to the silky cirrus, yet showing no fine forms of drift; but when the rain has passed, and the air is getting warm, forms the true clearing cloud, in wreaths that ascend continually with a slow circling motion, melting as they rise. The woodcut, Fig. 91, is a rude note of it floating more quietly from the hill of the Superga, the church (nearly as large as St. Paul's) appearing above, and thus showing the scale of the wreath.

§ 17. This cloud of evaporation, however, does not

always rise. It sometimes rests in absolute stillness, low laid in the hollows of the hills, their peaks emergent from it. Fig. 92 shows this condition of it, seen from a distance, among the Cenis hills. I do not know what gives it this disposition to rest in the ravines, nor whether there is a greater chill in the hollows, or a real action of gravity on the particles of cloud. In general, the position seems to depend on the temperature. Thus, in Chamouni, the crests of La Côte and Taconay continually appear in stormy weather as in Plate 36, Vol.

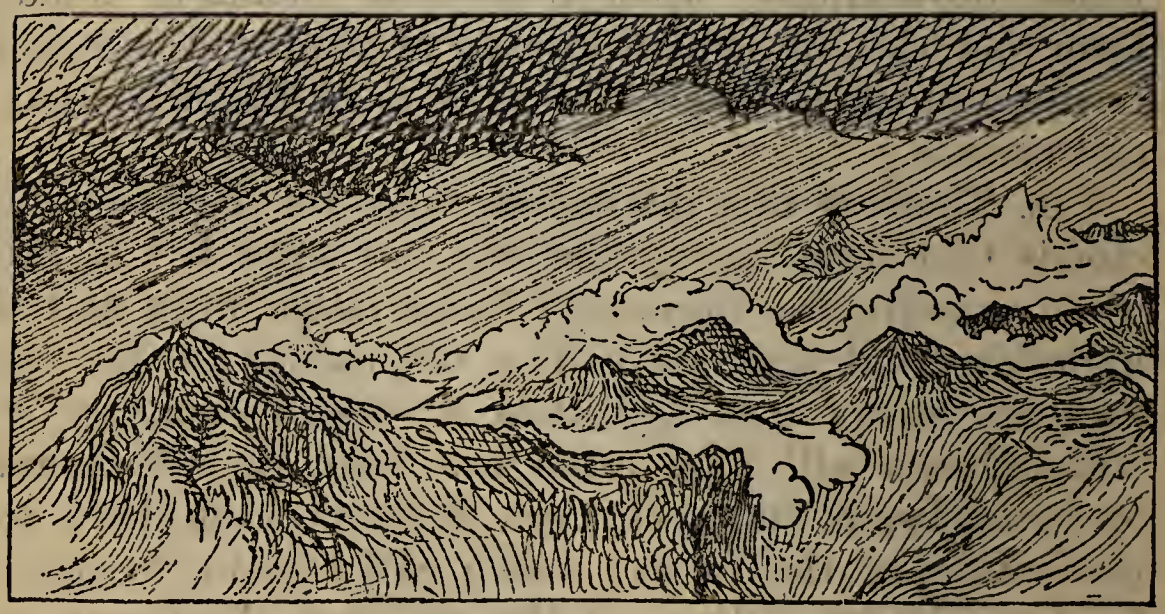


Fig. 92.

IV., in which I intended to represent rising drift-cloud, made dense between the crests by the chill from the glaciers. But in the condition shown in Fig. 92, on a comparatively open sweep of hill-side, the thermometer would certainly indicate a higher temperature in the sheltered valley than on the exposed peaks; yet the cloud still subsides into the valleys like folds of a garment; and, more than this, sometimes conditions of morning cloud, dependent, I believe, chiefly on dew evaporation, form first on the *tops* of the soft hills of wooded Switzerland, and droop down in rent fringes, and separate tongues, clinging close to all the hill-

sides, and giving them exactly the appearance of being covered with white fringed cloth, falling over them in torn or divided folds. It always looks like a true action of gravity. How far it is, in reality, the indication of the power of the rising sun causing evaporation, first on the hill-top, and then in separate streams, by its divided light on the ravines, I cannot tell. The subject is, as the reader perceives, always inextricably complicated by these three necessities—that to get a cloud in any given spot, you must have moisture to form the material of it, heat to develop it, and cold * to show it; and the adverse causes inducing the moisture, the evaporation, and the visibility are continually interchanged in presence and in power. And thus, also, the phenomena which properly belong to a certain elevation are confused, among hills at least, with those which in plains would have been lower or higher.

I have been led unavoidably in this chapter to speak of some conditions of the rain-cloud; nor can we finally understand the forms even of the cumulus, without considering those into which it descends or diffuses itself. Which, however, being, I think, a little more interesting than our work hitherto, we will leave this chapter to its dulness, and begin another.

* We might say light, as well as cold; for it wholly depends on the degree of light in the sky how far delicate cloud is seen.

The second figure from the top in Plate 69 shows an effect of morning light on the range of the Aiguille Bouchard (Chamouni). Every crag casts its shadow up into apparently clear sky. The shadow is, in such cases, a bluish gray, the color of clear sky; and the defining light is caused by the sunbeams showing mist which otherwise would have been unperceived. The shadows are not irregular enough in outline—the sketch was made for their color and sharpness, not their shape,—and I cannot now put them right, so I leave them as they were drawn at the moment.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ANGEL OF THE SEA.

§ 1. Perhaps the best and truest piece of work done in the first volume of this book, was the account given in it of the rain-cloud; to which I have here little, descriptively, to add. But the question before us now is, not who has drawn the rain-cloud best, but if it were worth drawing at all. Our English artists naturally painted it often and rightly; but are their pictures the better for it? We have seen how mountains are beautiful; how trees are beautiful; how sun-lighted clouds are beautiful; but can rain be beautiful?

I spoke roughly of the Italian painters in that chapter, because they could only draw distinct clouds, or violent storms, "massive concretions," while our northern painters could represent every phase of mist and fall of shower.

But is this indeed so delightful? Is English wet weather, indeed, one of the things which we should desire to see Art give perpetuity to?

Yes, assuredly. I have given some reasons for this answer in the fifth chapter of last volume; one or two, yet unnoticed, belong to the present division of our subject.

§ 2. The climates or lands into which our globe is divided may, with respect to their fitness for Art, be perhaps conveniently ranged under five heads:—

1. Forest-lands, sustaining the great mass of the magnificent vegetation of the tropics, for the most part char-

acterized by moist and unhealthy heat, and watered by enormous rivers, or periodical rains. This country cannot, I believe, develop the mind or art of man. He may reach great subtlety of intellect, as the Indian, but not become learned, nor produce any noble art, only a savage or grotesque form of it. Even supposing the evil influences of climate could be vanquished, the scenery is on too large a scale. It would be difficult to conceive of groves less fit for academic purposes than those mentioned by Humboldt, into which no one can enter except under a stout wooden shield, to avoid the chance of being killed by the fall of a nut.

2. Sand-lands, including the desert and dry-rock plains of the earth, inhabited generally by a nomade population, capable of high mental cultivation and of solemn monumental or religious art, but not of art in which pleasurableness forms a large element, their life being essentially one of hardship.

3. Grape and wheat lands, namely, rocks and hills, such as are good for the vine, associated with arable ground forming the noblest and best ground given to man. In these districts only art of the highest kind seems possible, the religious art of the sand-lands being here joined with that of pleasure or sense.

4. Meadow-lands, including the great pastoral and agricultural districts of the North, capable only of an inferior art: apt to lose its spirituality and become wholly material.

5. Moss-lands, including the rude forest-mountain and ground of the North, inhabited by a healthy race, capable of high mental cultivation and moral energy, but wholly incapable of art, except savage, like that of the forest-lands, or as in Scandinavia.

We might carry out these divisions into others, but these are I think essential, and easily remembered in a tabular form; saying "wood" instead of "forest," and

"field" for "meadow," we can get such a form shortly worded:—

Wood-lands.....	Shrewd intellect.....	No art.
Sand-lands.....	High intellect.....	Religious art.
Vine-lands.....	Highest intellect.....	Perfect art.
Field-lands.....	High intellect.....	Material art.
Moss-lands.....	Shrewd intellect.....	No art.

§ 3. In this table the moss-lands appear symmetrically opposed to the wood-lands, which in a sort they are; the too diminutive vegetation under bleakest heaven, opposed to the too colossal under sultriest heaven, while the perfect ministry of elements, represented by bread and wine, produces the perfect soul of man.

But this is not altogether so. The moss-lands have one great advantage over the forest-lands, namely, sight of the sky.

And not only sight of it, but continual and beneficent help from it. What they have to separate them from barren rock, namely, their moss and streams, being dependent on its direct help, not on great rivers coming from distant mountain chains, nor on vast tracts of ocean-mist coming up at evening, but on the continual play and change of sun and cloud.

§ 4. Note this word "change." The moss-lands have an infinite advantage, not only in sight, but in liberty; they are the freest ground in all the world. You can only traverse the great woods by crawling like a lizard, or climbing like a monkey — the great sands with slow steps and veiled head. But bare-headed, and open-eyed, and free-limbed, commanding all the horizon's space of changeful light, and all the horizon's compass of tossing ground, you traverse the moss-land. In discipline it is severe as the desert, but it is a discipline compelling to action; and the moss-lands seem, therefore, the rough schools of the world, in which its strongest

human frames are knit and tried, and so bent down, like the northern winds, to brace and brighten the languor into which the repose of more favored districts may degenerate.

§ 5. It would be strange, indeed, if there were no beauty in the phenomena by which this great renovating and purifying work is done. And it is done almost entirely by the great Angel of the Sea—rain; the Angel, observe, the messenger sent to a special place on a special errand. Not the diffused perpetual presence of the burden of mist, but the going and returning of intermittent cloud. All turns upon that intermittence. Soft moss on stone and rock;—cave-fern of tangled glen; wayside well—perennial, patient, silent, clear; stealing through its square font of rough-hewn stone; ever thus deep—no more—which the winter wreck sullies not, the summer thirst wastes not, incapable of stain as of decline—where the fallen leaf floats undecayed, and the insect darts undefiling. Cressed brook and ever-eddying river, lifted even in flood scarcely over its stepping-stones,—but through all sweet summer keeping tremulous music with harp-strings of dark water among the silver fingering of the pebbles. Far away in the south the strong river Gods have all hasted, and gone down to the sea. Wasted and burning, white furnaces of blasting sand, their broad beds lie ghastly and bare; but here the soft wings of the Sea Angel droop still with dew, and the shadows of their plumes falter on the hills: strange laughings, and glitterings of silver streamlets, born suddenly, and twined about the mossy heights in trickling tinsel, answering to them as they wave.*

§ 6. Nor are those wings colorless. We habitually think of the rain-cloud only as dark and gray; not knowing that we owe to it perhaps the fairest, though not the

* Compare the beautiful stanza beginning the epilogue of the "Golden Legend."

most dazzling of the hues of heaven. Often in our English mornings, the rain-clouds in the dawn form soft level fields, which melt imperceptibly into the blue; or when of less extent, gather into apparent bars, crossing the sheets of broader cloud above; and all these bathed throughout in an unspeakable light of pure rose-color, and purple, and amber, and blue; not shining, but misty-soft; the barred masses, when seen nearer, composed of clusters or tresses of cloud, like floss silk; looking as if each knot were a little swathe or sheaf of lighted rain. No clouds form such skies, none are so tender, various, inimitable. Turner himself never caught them. Correggio, putting out his whole strength, could have painted them, no other man.*

* I do not mean that Correggio is greater than Turner, but that only *his* way of work, the touch which he has used for the golden hair of Antiope, for instance, could have painted these clouds. In open low-

Fig. 93.

land country I have never been able to come to any satisfactory conclusion about their height, so strangely do they blend with each other. Here, for instance, is the arrangement of an actual group of them. The space at A was deep, purest ultramarine blue, traversed by streaks of absolutely pure and perfect rose-color. The blue passed downwards imperceptibly into gray at G, and then into amber, and at the white edge below into gold. On this amber ground the streaks P were dark purple, and, finally, the spaces at B B, again, clearest and most precious

§ 7. For these are the robes of love of the Angel of the Sea. To these that name is chiefly given, the "spreadings of the clouds," from their extent, their gentleness, their fulness of rain. Note how they are spoken of in Job xxxvi. v. 29–31. "By them judgeth he the people; he giveth meat in abundance. With clouds he covereth the light.* He hath hidden the light in his hands, and commanded that it should return. He speaks of it to his friend; that it is his possession, and that he may ascend thereto."

That, then, is the Sea Angel's message to God's friends; *that*, the meaning of those strange golden lights and purple flushes before the morning rain. The rain is sent to judge, and feed us; but the light is the possession of the friends of God, and they may ascend thereto,—where the tabernacle veil will cross and part its rays no more.

§ 8. But the Angel of the Sea has also another message,—in the "great rain of his strength," rain of trial, sweeping away ill-set foundations. Then his robe is not spread softly over the whole heaven, as a veil, but sweeps back from his shoulders, ponderous, oblique, terrible—leaving his sword-arm free.

blue, paler than that at A. The *two* levels of these clouds are always very notable. After a continuance of fine weather among the Alps, the determined approach of rain is usually announced by a soft, unbroken film of level cloud, white and thin at the approaching edge, gray at the horizon, covering the whole sky from side to side, and advancing steadily from the south-west. Under its gray veil, as it approaches, are formed detached bars, darker or lighter than the field above, according to the position of the sun. These bars are usually of a very sharply elongated oval shape, something like fish. I habitually call them "fish clouds," and look upon them with much discomfort, if any excursions of interest have been planned within the next three days. Their oval shape is a perspective deception dependent on their flatness; they are probably thin, extended fields, irregularly circular.

* I do not copy the interpolated words which follow, "and commandeth it *not to shine.*" The closing verse of the chapter, as we have it, is unintelligible; not so in the Vulgate, the reading of which I give.

The approach of trial-storm, hurricane-storm, is indeed in its vastness as the clouds of the softer rain. But it is not slow nor horizontal, but swift and steep: swift with passion of ravenous winds; steep as slope of some dark, hollowed hill. The fronting clouds come leaning forward, one thrusting the other aside, or on; impatient, ponderous, impendent, like globes of rock tossed of Titans—Ossa on Olympus—but hurled forward all, in one wave of cloud-lava—cloud whose throat is as a sepulchre. Fierce behind them rages the oblique wrath of the rain, white as ashes, dense as showers of driven steel; the pillars of it full of ghastly life; Rain-Furies, shrieking as they fly;—scourging, as with whips of scorpions;—the earth ringing and trembling under them, heaven wailing wildly, the trees stooped blindly down, covering their faces, quivering in every leaf with horror, ruin of their branches flying by them like black stubble.

§ 9. I wrote Furies. I ought to have written Gorgons. Perhaps the reader does not know that the Gorgons are not dead, are ever undying. We shall have to take our chance of being turned into stones by looking them in the face, presently. Meantime, I gather what part of the great Greek story of the Sea Angels, has meaning for us here.

Nereus, the God of the Sea, who dwells in it always (Neptune being the God who rules it from Olympus), has children by the Earth; namely, Thaumus, the father of Iris; that is, the "wonderful" or miracle-working angel of the sea; Phorcys, the malignant angel of it (you will find him degraded through many forms, at last, in the story of Sindbad, into the Old Man of the Sea); Ceto, the deep places of the sea, meaning its bays among rocks, therefore called by Hesiod "Fair-cheeked" Ceto; and Eurybia, the tidal force or sway of the sea, of whom more hereafter.

§ 10. Phorcys and Ceto, the malignant angel of the

sea, and the spirit of its deep rocky places, have children, namely, first, Graiæ, the soft rain-clouds. The Greeks had a greater dislike of storm than we have, and therefore whatever violence is in the action of rain, they represented by harsher types than we should—types given in one group by Aristophanes (speaking in mockery of the poets): "This was the reason, then, that they made so much talk about the fierce rushing of the moist clouds, coiled in glittering; and the locks of the hundred-headed Typhon; and the blowing storms; and the bent-clawed birds drifted on the breeze, fresh, and aërial." Note the expression "bent-clawed birds." It illustrates two characters of these clouds; partly their coiling form; but more directly the way they tear down the earth from the hill-sides; especially those twisted storm-clouds which in violent action become the waterspout. These always strike at a narrow point, often opening the earth on a hill-side into a trench as a great pickaxe would (whence the Graiæ are said to have only one beak between them.) Nevertheless, the rain-cloud was, on the whole, looked upon by the Greeks as beneficent, so that it is boasted of in the Œdipus Coloneus for its perpetual feeding of the springs of Cephisus,* and elsewhere often; and the opening song of the rain-clouds in Aristophanes is entirely beautiful:—

"O eternal Clouds! let us raise into open sight our dewy existence, from the deep-sounding Sea, our Father, up to the crests of the wooded hills, whence we look down over the sacred land, nourishing its fruits, and over the rippling of the divine rivers, and over the low murmuring bays of the deep." I cannot satisfy myself about the meaning of the names of the Graiæ—Pephredo and Enuo—but the epithets which Hesiod gives

*I assume the ἄϋπνοι κρῆναι νουάδες to mean clouds, not springs; but this does not matter, the whole passage being one of rejoicing in moisture and dew of heaven.

them are interesting: "Pephredo, the well-robed; Enuo, the crocus-robed;" probably, it seems to me, from their beautiful colors in morning.

§ 11. Next to the Graiæ, Phorcys and Ceto begat the Gorgons, which are the true storm-clouds. The Graiæ have only one beak or tooth, but all the Gorgons have tusks like boars; brazen hands (brass being the word used for the metal of which the Greeks made their spears), and golden wings.

Their names are "Steino" (straitened), of storms compressed into narrow compass; "Euryale" (having wide threshing-floor), of storms spread over great space; "Medusa" (the dominant), the most terrible. She is essentially the highest storm-cloud; therefore the hail-cloud or cloud of cold, her countenance turning all who behold it to stone. ("He casteth forth his ice like morsels. Who can stand before his cold?") The serpents about her head are the fringes of the hail, the idea of coldness being connected by the Greeks with the bite of the serpent, as with the hemlock.

§ 12. On Minerva's shield, her head signifies, I believe, the cloudy coldness of knowledge, and its venomous character ("Knowledge puffeth up." Compare Bacon in Advancement of Learning). But the idea of serpents rose essentially from the change of form in the cloud as it broke; the cumulus cloud not breaking into full storm till it is cloven by the cirrus; which is twice hinted at in the story of Perseus; only we must go back a little to gather it together.

Perseus was the son of Jupiter by Danaë, who being shut in a brazen tower, Jupiter came to her in a shower of gold: the brazen tower being, I think, only another expression for the cumulus or Medusa cloud; and the golden rain for the rays of the sun striking it; but we have not only this rain of Danaë's to remember in connection with the Gorgon, but that also of the sieves of

the Danaïdes, said to represent the provision of Argos with water by their father Danaüs, who dug wells about the Acropolis; nor only wells, but opened, I doubt not, channels of irrigation for the fields, because the Danaïdes are said to have brought the mysteries of Ceres from Egypt. And though I cannot trace the root of the names Danaüs and Danaë, there is assuredly some farther link of connection in the deaths of the lovers of the Danaïdes, whom they slew, as Perseus Medusa. And again note, that when the father of Danaë, Acrisius, is detained in Seriphos by storms, a disk thrown by Perseus is carried *by the wind against his head*, and kills him; and lastly, when Perseus cuts off the head of Medusa, from her blood springs Chrysaor, "wielder of the golden sword," the Angel of the Lightning and Pegasus, the Angel of the "Wild Fountains," that is to say, the fastest flying or lower rain-cloud; winged, but racing as upon the earth.

§ 13. I say, "wild" fountains; because the kind of fountain from which Pegasus is named is especially the "fountain of the great deep" of Genesis; sudden and furious, (cataracts of heaven, not windows, in the Septuagint);—the mountain torrent caused by thunderous storm, or as our "fountain"—a Geyser-like leaping forth of water. Therefore, it is the deep and full source of streams, and so used typically of the source of evils, or of passions; whereas the word "spring" with the Greeks is like our "well-head"—a gentle issuing forth of water continually. But, because both the lightning-fire and the gushing forth, as of a fountain, are the signs of the poet's true power, together with perpetuity, it is Pegasus who strikes the earth with his foot, on Helicon,* and

* I believe, however, that when Pegasus strikes forth this fountain, he is to be regarded, not as springing from Medusa's blood, but as born of Medusa by Neptune; the true horse was given by Neptune striking the earth with his trident; the divine horse is born to Neptune and the storm-cloud.

causes Hippocrene to spring forth—"the horse's well-head." It is perpetual; but has, nevertheless, the Pegasean storm-power.

§ 14. Wherein we may find, I think, sufficient cause for putting honor upon the rain-cloud. Few of us, perhaps, have thought, in watching its career across our own mossy hills, or listening to the murmur of the springs amidst the mountain quietness, that the chief masters of the human imagination owed, and confessed that they owed, the force of their noblest thoughts, not to the flowers of the valley, nor the majesty of the hill, but to the flying cloud.

Yet they never saw it fly, as we may in our own England. So far, at least, as I know the clouds of the south, they are often more terrible than ours, but the English Pegasus is swifter. On the Yorkshire and Derbyshire hills, when the rain-cloud is low and much broken, and the steady west-wind fills all space with its strength,* the sun-gleams fly like golden vultures: they are flashes rather than shinings; the dark spaces and the dazzling race and skim along the acclivities, and dart and dip from crag to dell, swallow-like;—no Graiæ these,—gray and withered: Grey Hounds rather, following the Cerinthian stag with the golden antlers.

§ 15. There is one character about these lower rain-clouds, partly affecting all their connection with the up-

*I have been often at great heights on the Alps in rough weather, and have seen strong gusts of storm in the plains of the south. But, to get full expression of the very heart and meaning of wind, there is no place like a Yorkshire moor. I think Scottish breezes are thinner, very bleak and piercing, but not substantial. If you lean on them they will let you fall, but one may rest against a Yorkshire breeze as one would on a quickset hedge. I shall not soon forget,—having had the good fortune to meet a vigorous one on an April morning, between Hawes and Settle, just on the flat under Wharnside,—the vague sense of wonder with which I watched Ingleborough stand without rocking.

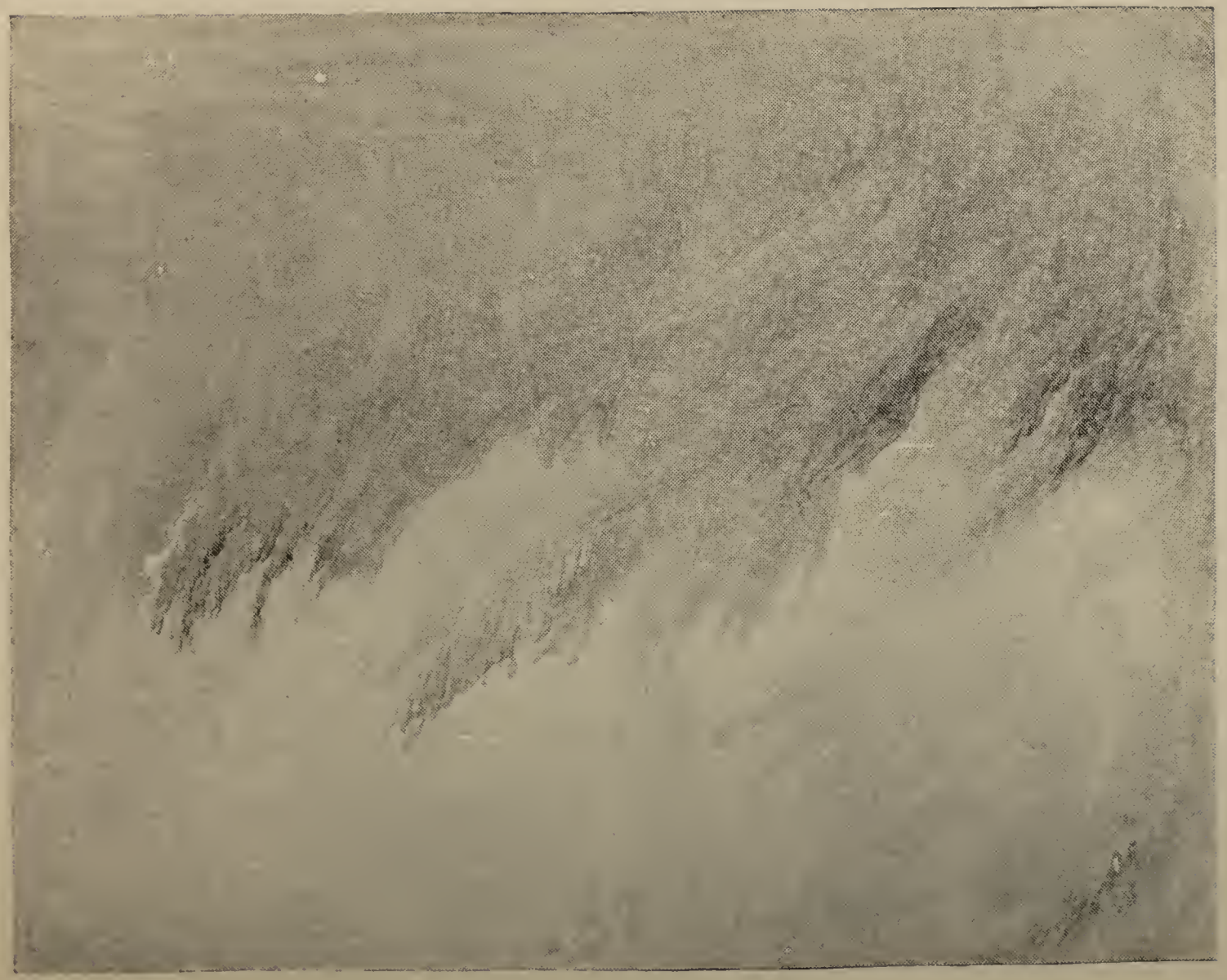


PLATE LXXII.—THE LOCKS OF TYPHON.

per sky, which I have never been able to account for; that which, as before noticed, Aristophanes fastened on at once for their distinctive character — their obliquity. They always fly in an oblique position, as in the Plate opposite, which is a careful facsimile of the first advancing mass of the rain-cloud in Turner's Slave Ship. When the head of the cloud is foremost, as in this instance, and rain falling beneath, it is easy to imagine that its drops, increasing in size as they fall, may exercise some retarding action on the wind. But the head of the cloud is not always first, the base of it is sometimes advanced.* The only certainty is, that it will not shape itself horizontally, its thin drawn lines and main contours will always be oblique, though its motion is horizontal; and, which is still more curious, their sloping lines are hardly ever modified in their descent by any distinct retiring tendency or perspective convergence. A troop of leaning clouds will follow one another, each stooping forward at the same apparent slope, round a fourth of the horizon.

§ 16. Another circumstance which the reader should note in this cloud of Turner's, is the witch-like look of drifted or erected locks of hair at its left side. We have just read the words of the old Greek poet: "Locks of the hundred-headed Typhon;" and must remember that Turner's account of this picture, in the Academy catalogue, was "Slaver throwing overboard the Dead and Dying. *Typhoon* coming on." The resemblance to wildly drifted hair is stronger in the picture than in the engraving; the gray and purple tints of torn cloud being relieved against golden sky beyond.

§ 17. It was not, however, as we saw, merely to locks of hair, but to serpents, that the Greeks likened the

* When there is a violent current of wind near the ground, the rain columns slope *forward* at the foot. See the Entrance to Fowey Harbor, of the England Series.

dissolving of the Medusa cloud in blood. Of that sanguine rain, or of its meaning, I cannot yet speak. It is connected with other and higher types, which must be traced in another place.*

But the likeness to serpents we may illustrate here. The two Plates already given, 70 and 71 (at page 171), represent successive conditions of the Medusa cloud on one of the Cenis hills (the great limestone precipice above St. Michel, between Lanslebourg and St. Jean di Maurienne).† In the first, the cloud is approaching, with the lee-side cloud forming beyond it; in the second, it has approached, increased, and broken, the Medusa serpents writhing about the central peak, the rounded tops of the broken cumulus showing above. In this instance, they take nearly the forms of flame; but when the storm is more violent, they are torn into fragments, and magnificent revolving wheels of vapor are formed, broken, and tossed into the air, as the grass is tossed in the hay-field from the toothed wheels of the mowing-machine; perhaps, in common with all other inventions of the kind, likely to bring more evil upon men than ever the Medusa cloud did, and turn them more effectually into stone.‡

§ 18. I have named in the first volume the principal works of Turner representing these clouds; and until I am able to draw them better, it is useless to say more

* See Part IX. chap. 2, "The Hesperid Æglé."

† The reader must remember that sketches made as these are, on the instant, cannot be far carried, and would lose all their use if they were finished at home. These were both made in pencil, and merely washed with gray on returning to the inn, enough to secure the main forms.

‡ I do not say this carelessly, nor because machines throw the laboring man "out of work." The laboring man will always have more work than he wants. I speak thus, because the use of such machinery involves the destruction of all pleasures in rural labor; and I doubt not, in that destruction, the essential deterioration of the national mind.

of them; but in connection with the subject we have been examining, I should be glad if the reader could turn to the engravings of the England drawings of Salisbury and Stonehenge. What opportunities Turner had of acquainting himself with classical literature, and how he used them, we shall see presently. In the meantime, let me simply assure the reader that, in various byways, he had gained a knowledge of most of the great Greek traditions, and that he felt them more than he knew them; his mind being affected, up to a certain point, precisely as an ancient painter's would have been, by external phenomena of nature. To him, as to the Greek, the storm-clouds seemed messengers of fate. He feared them, while he reverenced; nor does he ever introduce them without some hidden purpose, bearing upon the expression of the scene he is painting.

§ 19. On that plain of Salisbury, he had been struck first by its widely-spacious pastoral life; and secondly, by its monuments of the two great religions of England —Druidical and Christian.

He was not a man to miss the possible connection of these impressions. He treats the shepherd life as a type of the ecclesiastical; and composes his two drawings so as to illustrate both.

In the drawing of Salisbury, the plain is swept by rapid but not distressful rain. The cathedral occupies the centre of the picture, towering high over the city, of which the houses (made on purpose smaller than they really are) are scattered about it like a flock of sheep. The cathedral is surrounded by a great light. The storm gives way at first in a subdued gleam over a distant parish church, then bursts down again, breaks away into full light about the cathedral, and passes over the city, in various sun and shade. In the foreground stands a shepherd leaning on his staff, watching his flock—bareheaded; he has given his cloak to a group of

children, who have covered themselves up with it, and are shrinking from the rain; his dog crouches under a bank; his sheep, for the most part, are resting quietly, some coming up the slope of the bank towards him.*

§ 20. The rain-clouds in this picture are wrought with a care which I have never seen equalled in any other sky of the same kind. It is the rain of blessing—abundant, but full of brightness; golden gleams are flying across the wet grass, and fall softly on the lines of willows in the valley—willows by the watercourses; the little brooks flash out here and there between them and the fields. Turn now to the Stonehenge. That, also, stands in great light; but it is the Gorgon light—the sword of Chrysaor is bared against it. The cloud of judgment hangs above. The rock pillars seem to reel before its slope, pale beneath the lightning. And nearer, in the darkness, the shepherd lies dead, his flock scattered.

I alluded, in speaking before of this Stonehenge, to Turner's use of the same symbol in the drawing of Pæstum for Rogers's Italy; but a more striking instance of its employment occurs in a Study of Pæstum, which he engraved himself before undertaking the Liber Studiorum and another in his drawing of the Temple of Minerva, on Cape Colonna: and observe farther that he rarely introduces lightning, if the ruined building has not been devoted to religion. The wrath of man may destroy the fortress, but only the wrath of heaven can destroy the temple.

§ 21. Of these secret meanings of Turner's, we shall see enough in the course of the inquiry we have to undertake, lastly, respecting ideas of relation; but one more instance of his opposed use of the lightning sym-

* You may see the arrangement of subject in the published engraving, but nothing more; it is among the worst engravings in the England Series.

bol, and of the rain of blessing, I name here, to confirm what has been noted above. For, in this last instance, he was questioned respecting his meaning, and explained it. I refer to the drawings of Sinai and Lebanon, made for Finden's Bible. The sketches from which Turner prepared that series were, I believe, careful and accurate; but the treatment of the subjects was left wholly to him. He took the Sinai and Lebanon to show the opposite influences of the Law and the Gospel. The Rock of Moses is shown in the burning of the desert, among fallen stones, forked lightning cleaving the blue mist which veils the summit of Sinai. Armed Arabs pause at the foot of the rock. No human habitation is seen, nor any herb or tree, nor any brook, and the lightning strikes without rain.* Over the Mount Lebanon an intensely soft gray-blue sky is melting into dewy rain. Every ravine is filled, every promontory crowned, by tenderest foliage, golden in slanting sunshine.† The white convent nestles into the hollow of the rock; and a little brook runs under the shadow of the nearer trees, beside which two monks sit reading.

§ 22. It was a beautiful thought, yet an erring one, as all thoughts are which oppose the Law to the Gospel. When people read, "the law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Christ," do they suppose that the law was ungracious and untrue? The law was given for a foundation; the grace (or mercy) and truth for fulfilment;—the whole forming one glorious Trinity of judgment, mercy, and truth. And if people would but read the text of their Bibles with heartier purpose of understanding it, instead of superstitiously, they would see that throughout the parts which they are intended to make most personally their own (the Psalms) it is always the Law which is spoken of with chief joy. The Psalms respect-

* Hosea xiii. 5, 15.

† Hosea xiv. 4, 5, 6. Compare Psalm lxxii. 6–16.

ing mercy are often sorrowful, as in thought of what it cost; but those respecting the law are always full of delight. David cannot contain himself for joy in thinking of it,—he is never weary of its praise:—"How love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thy testimonies are my delight and my counsellors; sweeter, also, than honey and the honeycomb."

§ 23. And I desire, especially, that the reader should note this, in now closing the work through which we have passed together in the investigation of the beauty of the visible world. For perhaps he expected more pleasure and freedom in that work; he thought that it would lead him at once into fields of fond imagination, and may have been surprised to find that the following of beauty brought him always under a sterner dominion of mysterious law; the brightness was continually based upon obedience, and all majesty only another form of submission. But this is indeed so. I have been perpetually hindered in this inquiry into the sources of beauty by fear of wearying the reader with their severities. It was always accuracy I had to ask of him, not sympathy; patience, not zeal; apprehension, not sensation. The thing to be shown him was not a pleasure to be snatched, but a law to be learned.

§ 24. It is in this character, however, that the beauty of the natural world completes its message. We saw long ago, how its various *powers* of appeal to the mind of men might be traced to some typical expression of Divine attributes. We have seen since how its *modes* of appeal present constant types of human obedience to the Divine law, and constant proofs that this law, instead of being contrary to mercy, is the foundation of all delight, and the guide of all fair and fortunate existence.

§ 25. Which understanding, let us receive our last message from the Angel of the Sea.

Take up the 19th Psalm and look at it verse by verse.

Perhaps to my younger readers, one word may be permitted respecting their Bible-reading in general.* The Bible is, indeed, a deep book, when depth is required, that is to say, for deep people. But it is not intended, particularly, for profound persons; on the contrary, much more for shallow and simple persons. And therefore the first, and generally the main and leading idea of the Bible, is on its surface, written in plainest possible Greek, Hebrew, or English, needing no penetration, nor amplification, needing nothing but what we all might give—attention.

But this, which is in every one's power, and is the only thing that God wants, is just the last thing any one will give Him. We are delighted to ramble away into day-dreams, to repeat pet verses from other places, suggested by chance words; to snap at an expression which suits our own particular views, or to dig up a meaning from under a verse, which we should be amiably grieved to think any human being had been so happy as to find before. But the plain, intended, immediate, fruitful meaning, which every one ought to find always, and especially that which depends on our seeing the relation of the verse to those near it, and getting the force of the whole passage, in due relation—this sort of significance we do not look for;—it being,

* I believe few sermons are more false or dangerous than those in which the teacher professes to impress his audience by showing "how much there is in a verse." If he examined his own heart closely before beginning, he would often find that his real desire was to show how much he, the expounder, could make out of the verse. But entirely honest and earnest men often fall into the same error. They have been taught that they should always look deep, and that Scripture is full of hidden meanings; and they easily yield to the flattering conviction that every chance idea which comes into their heads in looking at a word, is put there by Divine agency. Hence they wander away into what they believe to be an inspired meditation, but which is, in reality, a meaningless jumble of ideas; perhaps very proper ideas, but with which the text in question has nothing whatever to do.

truly, not to be discovered, unless we really attend to what is said, instead of to our own feelings.

§ 26. It is unfortunate also, but very certain, that in order to attend to what is said, we must go through the irksomeness of knowing the meaning of the words. And the first thing that children should be taught about their Bibles is, to distinguish clearly between words that they understand and words that they do not; and to put aside the words they do not understand, and verses connected with them, to be asked about, or for a future time; and never to think they are reading the Bible when they are merely repeating phrases of an unknown tongue.

§ 27. Let us try, by way of example, this 19th Psalm, and see what plain meaning is uppermost in it.

"The heavens declare the glory of God."

What are the heavens?

The word occurring in the Lord's Prayer, and the thing expressed being what a child may, with some advantage, be led to look at, it might be supposed among a schoolmaster's first duties to explain this word clearly.

Now there can be no question that in the minds of the sacred writers, it stood naturally for the entire system of cloud, and of space beyond it, conceived by them as a vault set with stars. But there can, also, be no question, as we saw in previous inquiry, that the firmament, which is said to have been "called" heaven, at the creation, expresses, in all definite use of the word, the system of clouds, as spreading the power of the water over the earth; hence the constant expressions dew of heaven, rain of heaven, etc., where heaven is used in the singular; while "the heavens," when used plurally, and especially when in distinction, as here, from the word "firmament," remained expressive of the starry space beyond.

§ 28. A child might therefore be told (surely, with

advantage), that our beautiful word Heaven may posssibly have been formed from a Hebrew word, meaning "the high place;" that the great warrior Roman nation, camping much out at night, generally overtired and not in moods for thinking, are believed, by many people, to have seen in the stars only the likeness of the glittering studs of their armor, and to have called the sky "The bossed, or studded;" but that others think those Roman soldiers on their night-watches had rather been impressed by the great emptiness and void of night, and by the far coming of sounds through its darkness, and had called the heaven "The Hollow place." Finally, I should tell the children, showing them first the setting of a star, how the great Greeks had found out the truest power of the heavens, and had called them "The Rolling." But whatever different nations had called them, at least I would make it clear to the child's mind that in this 19th Psalm, their whole power being intended, the two words are used which express it: the Heavens, for the great vault or void, with all its planets, and stars, and ceaseless march of orbs innumerable; and the Firmament, for the ordinance of the clouds.

These heavens, then, "declare the *glory* of God;" that is, the light of God, the eternal glory, stable and changeless. As their orbs fail not—but pursue their course for ever, to give light upon the earth—so God's glory surrounds man for ever—changeless, in its fulness insupportable—infinite.

"And the firmament showeth his *handywork.*"

§ 29. The clouds, prepared by the hand of God for the help of man, varied in their ministration—veiling the inner splendor—show, not His eternal glory, but His daily handiwork. So He dealt with Moses. I will cover thee "with my hand" as I pass by. Compare Job xxxvi. 24: "Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold. Every man may see it." Not so the glory—

that only in part; the courses of these stars are to be seen imperfectly, and but by a few. But this firmament, "every man may see it, man may behold it afar off." "Behold, God is great, and we know him not. For he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapor thereof."

§ 30. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. They have no speech nor language, yet without these their voice is heard. Their rule is gone out throughout the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

Note that. Their rule throughout the earth, whether inhabited or not—their law of right is thereon; but their words, spoken to human souls, to the end of the inhabited world.

"In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun," etc. Literally, a tabernacle, or curtained tent, with its veil and its hangings; also of the colors of His desert tabernacle—blue, and purple, and scarlet.

Thus far the psalm describes the manner of this great heaven's message.

Thenceforward, it comes to the matter of it.

§ 31. Observe, you have the two divisions of the declaration. The heavens (compare Psalm viii.) declare the eternal glory of God before men, and the firmament the daily mercy of God towards men. And the eternal glory is in this—that the law of the Lord is perfect, and His testimony sure, and His statutes right.

And the daily mercy in this—that the commandment of the Lord is pure, and His fear is clean, and His judgments true and righteous.

There are three oppositions:—

Between law and commandment.

Between testimony and fear.

Between statute and judgment.

§ 32. I. Between law and commandment.

The law is fixed and everlasting; uttered once, abiding for ever, as the sun, it may not be moved. It is "perfect, converting the soul:" the whole question about the soul being, whether it has been turned from darkness to light, acknowledged this law or not,—whether it is godly or ungodly? But the commandment is given momentarily to each man, according to the need. It does not convert: it guides. It does not concern the entire purpose of the soul; but it enlightens the eyes, respecting a special act. The law is, "Do this always;" the commandment, "Do *thou* this *now*:" often mysterious enough, and through the cloud; chilling, and with strange rain of tears; yet always pure (the law converting, but the commandment cleansing): a rod not for guiding merely, but for strengthening, and tasting honey with. "Look how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey."

§ 33. II. Between testimony and fear.

The testimony is everlasting: the true promise of salvation. Bright as the sun beyond all the earth-cloud, it makes wise the simple; all wisdom being assured in perceiving it and trusting it; all wisdom brought to nothing which does not perceive it.

But the fear of God is taught through special encouragement and special withdrawal of it, according to each man's need—by the earth-cloud—smile and frown alternately: it also, as the commandment, is clean, purging and casting out all other fear, it only remaining for ever.

§ 34. III. Between statute and judgment.

The statutes are the appointments of the Eternal justice; fixed and bright, and constant as the stars; equal and balanced as their courses. They "are right, rejoicing the heart." But the judgments are special judgments of given acts of men. "True," that is to say, fulfilling the warning or promise given to each man;

"righteous altogether," that is, done or executed in truth and righteousness. The statute is right, in appointment. The judgment righteous altogether, in appointment and fulfilment;—yet not always rejoicing the heart.

Then, respecting all these, comes the expression of passionate desire, and of joy; that also divided with respect to each. The glory of God, eternal in the Heavens, is future, "to be *desired* more than gold, than much fine gold"—treasure in the heavens that faileth not. But the present guidance and teaching of God on earth; they are now possessed, sweeter than all earthly food—"sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them" (the law and the testimony) "is thy servant warned"—warned of the ways of death and life.

"And in keeping them" (the commandments and the judgments) "there is great reward:" pain now, and bitterness of tears, but reward unspeakable.

§ 35. Thus far the psalm has been descriptive and interpreting. It ends in prayer.

"Who can understand his errors?" (wanderings from the perfect law.) "Cleanse thou me from secret faults; from all that I have done against thy will, and far from thy way, in the darkness. Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins" (sins against the commandment) "against thy will when it is seen and direct, pleading with heart and conscience. So shall I be undefiled, and innocent from the great transgression—the transgression that crucifies afresh.

"Let the words of my mouth (for I have set them to declare thy law), and the meditation of my heart (for I have set it to keep thy commandments), be acceptable in thy sight, whose glory is my strength, and whose work, my redemption; my Strength, and my Redeemer."

PART VIII.

OF IDEAS OF RELATION:—FIRST, OF INVENTION FORMAL.

CHAPTER I.

THE LAW OF HELP.

§ 1. We have now reached the last and the most important part of our subject. We have seen, in the first division of this book, how far art may be, and has been, consistent with physical or material facts. In its second division, we examined how far it may be and has been obedient to the laws of physical beauty. In this last division we have to consider its relations of art to God and man. Its work in the help of human beings, and service of their Creator.

We have to inquire into the various Powers, Conditions, and Aims of mind involved in the conception or creation of pictures; in the choice of subject, and the mode and order of its history;—the choice of forms, and the modes of their arrangement.

And these phases of mind being concerned, partly with choice and arrangement of incidents, partly with choice and arrangement of forms and colors, the whole subject will fall into two main divisions, namely, expressional or spiritual invention; and material or formal invention.

They are of course connected;—all good formal invention being expressional also; but as a matter of convenience it is best to say what may be ascertained of the nature of formal invention, before attempting to illustrate the faculty in its higher field.

§ 2. First, then, of INVENTION FORMAL, otherwise and most commonly called technical composition; that is to say, the arrangement of lines, forms, or colors, so as to produce the best possible effect.*

I have often been accused of slighting this quality in pictures; the fact being that I have avoided it only because I considered it too great and wonderful for me to deal with. The longer I thought, the more wonderful it always seemed; and it is, to myself personally, the quality, above all others, which gives me delight in pictures. Many others I admire, or respect; but this one I rejoice in. Expression, sentiment, truth to nature, are essential; but all these are not enough. I never care to look at a picture again, if it be ill composed; and if well composed I can hardly leave off looking at it.

"Well composed." Does that mean according to rule?

No. Precisely the contrary. Composed as only the man who did it could have done it; composed as no

* The word composition has been so much abused, and is in itself so inexpressive, that when I wrote the first part of this work I intended always to use, in this final section of it, the word "invention," and to reserve the term "composition" for that false composition which can be taught on principles; as I have already so employed the term in the chapter on "Imagination Associative," in the second volume. But, in arranging this section, I find it is not conveniently possible to avoid the ordinary modes or parlance; I therefore only head the section as I intended (and as is, indeed, best), using in the text the ordinarily accepted term; only, the reader must be careful to note that what I spoke of shortly as "composition" in the chapters on "Imagination," I here always call, distinctly, "false composition;" using here, as I find most convenient, the words "invention" or "composition" indifferently for the true faculty.

other picture is, or was, or ever can be again. Every great work stands alone.

§ 3. Yet there are certain elementary laws of arrangement traceable a little way; a few of these only I shall note, not caring to pursue the subject far in this work, so intricate it becomes even in its first elements: nor could it be treated with any approach to completeness, unless I were to give many and elaborate outlines of large pictures. I have a vague hope of entering on such a task, some future day. Meantime I shall only indicate the place which technical composition should hold in our scheme.

And, first, let us understand what composition is, and how far it is required.

§ 4. Composition may be best defined as the help of everything in the picture by everything else.

I wish the reader to dwell a little on this word "Help." It is a grave one.

In substance which we call "inanimate," as of clouds, or stones, their atoms may cohere to each other, or consist with each other, but they do not help each other. The removal of one part does not injure the rest.

But in a plant, the taking away of any one part does injure the rest. Hurt or remove any portion of the sap, bark, or pith, the rest is injured. If any part enters into a state in which it no more assists the rest, and has thus become "helpless," we call it also "dead."

The power which causes the several portions of the plant to help each other, we call life. Much more is this so in an animal. We may take away the branch of a tree without much harm to it; but not the animal's limb. Thus, intensity of life is also intensity of helpfulness—completeness of depending of each part on all the rest. The ceasing of this help is what we call corruption; and in proportion to the perfectness of the help, is the dread-

fulness of the loss. The more intense the life has been, the more terrible is its corruption.

The decomposition of a crystal is not necessarily impure at all. The fermentation of a wholesome liquid begins to admit the idea slightly; the decay of leaves yet more; of flowers, more; of animals, with greater painfulness and terribleness in exact proportion to their original vitality; and the foulest of all corruption is that of the body of man; and, in his body, that which is occasioned by disease, more than that of natural death.

§ 5. I said just now, that though atoms of inanimate substance could not help each other, they could "consist" with each other. "Consistence" is their virtue. Thus the parts of a crystal are consistent, but of dust, inconsistent. Orderly adherence, the best help its atoms can give, constitutes the nobleness of such substance.

When matter is either consistent, or living, we call it pure, or clean; when inconsistent, or corrupting (unhelpful), we call it impure, or unclean. The greatest uncleanliness being that which is essentially most opposite to life.

Life and consistency, then, both expressing one character (namely, helpfulness, of a higher or lower order), the Maker of all creatures and things, "by whom all creatures live, and all things consist," is essentially and for ever the Helpful One, or in softer Saxon, the "Holy" One.

The word has no other ultimate meaning: Helpful, harmless, undefiled: "living" or "Lord of life."

The idea is clear and mighty in the cherubim's cry: "Helpful, helpful, helpful, Lord God of Hosts;" *i.e.* of all the hosts, armies, and creatures of the earth.*

* "The cries of them which have reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth (of all the creatures of the earth)." You will find a wonderful clearness come into many texts by reading, habitu-

§ 6. A pure or holy state of anything, therefore, is that in which all its parts are helpful or consistent. They may or may not be homogeneous. The highest or organic purities are composed of many elements in an entirely helpful state. The highest and first law of the universe—and the other name of life, is, therefore, "help." The other name of death is "separation." Government and co-operation are in all things and eternally the laws of life. Anarchy and competition, eternally, and in all things, the laws of death.

§ 7. Perhaps the best, though the most familiar example we could take of the nature and power of consistence, will be that of the possible changes in the dust we tread on.

Exclusive of animal decay, we can hardly arrive at a more absolute type of impurity than the mud or slime of a damp overtrodden path, in the outskirts of a manufacturing town. I do not say mud of the road, because that is mixed with animal refuse; but take merely an ounce or two of the blackest slime of a beaten footpath on a rainy day, near a large manufacturing town.

§ 8. That slime we shall find in most cases composed of clay (or brickdust, which is burnt clay) mixed with soot, a little sand, and water. All these elements are at helpless war with each other, and destroy reciprocally each other's nature and power, competing and fighting for place at every tread of your foot;—sand squeezing out clay, and clay squeezing out water, and soot meddling everywhere and defiling the whole. Let us suppose that this ounce of mud is left in perfect rest, and that its elements gather together, like to like, so that their atoms may get into the closest relations possible.

ally, "helpful" and "helpfulness" for "holy" and "holiness," or else "living," as in Rom. xi. 16. The sense "dedicated" (the Latin *sanctus*), being, of course, inapplicable to the Supreme Being, is an entirely secondary and accidental one.

§ 9. Let the clay begin. Ridding itself of all foreign substance, it gradually becomes a white earth, already very beautiful; and fit, with help of congealing fire, to be made into finest porcelain, and painted on, and be kept in king's palaces. But such artificial consistence is not its best. Leave it still quiet to follow its own instinct of unity, and it becomes not only white, but clear; not only clear, but hard; not only clear and hard, but so set that it can deal with light in a wonderful way, and gather out of it the loveliest blue rays only, refusing the rest. We call it then a sapphire.

Such being the consummation of the clay, we give similar permission of quiet to the sand. It also becomes, first, a white earth, then proceeds to grow clear and hard, and at last arranges itself in mysterious, infinitely fine, parallel lines, which have the power of reflecting not merely the blue rays, but the blue, green, purple, and red rays in the greatest beauty in which they can be seen through any hard material whatsoever. We call it then an opal.

In next order the soot sets to work; it cannot make itself white at first, but instead of being discouraged, tries harder and harder, and comes out clear at last, and the hardest thing in the world; and for the blackness that it had, obtains in exchange the power of reflecting all the rays of the sun at once in the vividest blaze that any solid thing can shoot. We call it then a diamond.

Last of all the water purifies or unites itself, contented enough if it only reach the form of a dew-drop; but if we insist on its proceeding to a more perfect consistence, it crystallizes into the shape of a star.

And for the ounce of slime which we had by political economy of competition, we have by political economy of co-operation, a sapphire, an opal, and a diamond, set in the midst of a star of snow.

§ 10. Now invention in art signifies an arrangement,

in which everything in the work is thus consistent with all things else, and helpful to all else.

It is the greatest and rarest of all the qualities of art. The power by which it is effected is absolutely inexplicable and incommunicable; but exercised with entire facility by those who possess it, in many cases even unconsciously.*

In work which is not composed, there may be many beautiful things, but they do not help each other. They at the best only stand beside, and more usually compete with and destroy, each other. They may be connected artificially in many ways, but the test of there being no invention is, that if one of them be taken away, the others are no worse than before. But in true composition, if one be taken away, all the rest are helpless and valueless. Generally, in falsely composed work, if anything be taken away, the rest will look better; because the attention is less distracted. Hence the pleasure of inferior artists in sketching, and their inability to finish; all that they add destroys.

§ 11. Also in true composition, everything not only helps everything else a *little*, but helps with its utmost power. Every atom is in full energy; and *all* that energy is kind. Not a line, nor spark of color, but is doing its very best, and that best is aid. The extent to which this law is carried in truly right and noble work is wholly inconceivable to the ordinary observer, and no true account of it would be believed.

* By diligent study of good compositions it is possible to put work together, so that the parts shall help each other, a little, or at all events do no harm; and when some tact and taste are associated with this diligence, semblances of real invention are often produced, which, being the results of great labor, the artist is always proud of; and which, being capable of learned explanation and imitation, the spectator naturally takes interest in. The common precepts about composition all produce and teach this false kind, which, as true composition is the noblest, being the corruption of it, is the ignoblest condition of art.

§ 12. True composition being entirely easy to the man who can compose, he is seldom proud of it, though he clearly recognizes it. Also, true composition is inexplicable. No one can explain how the notes of a Mozart melody, or the folds of a piece of Titian's drapery, produce their essential effect on each other. If you do not feel it, no one can by reasoning make you feel it. And, the highest composition is so subtle, that it is apt to become unpopular, and sometimes seem insipid.

§ 13. The reader may be surprised at my giving so high a place to invention. But if he ever come to know true invention from false, he will find that it is not only the highest quality of art, but is simply the most wonderful act or power of humanity. It is pre-eminently the deed of human creation; ποίησις, otherwise, poetry.

If the reader will look back to my definition of poetry, he will find it is "the suggestion, by the imagination, of noble grounds for the noble emotions" (Vol. III. p. 30), amplified below (§ 14) into "assembling by help of the imagination;" that is to say, imagination associative, described at length in Vol. II., in the chapter just referred to. The mystery of the power is sufficiently set forth in that place. Of its dignity I have a word or two to say here.

§ 14. Men in their several professed employments, looked at broadly, may be properly arranged under five classes:—

1. Persons who see. These in modern language are sometimes called sight-seers, that being an occupation coming more and more into vogue every day. Anciently they used to be called, simply, seers.

2. Persons who talk. These, in modern language, are usually called talkers, or speakers, as in the House of Commons, and elsewhere. They used to be called prophets.

3. Persons who make. These, in modern language, are

usually called manufacturers. Anciently they were called poets.

4. Persons who think. There seems to be no very distinct modern title for this kind of person, anciently called philosophers; nevertheless we have a few of them among us.

5. Persons who do: in modern language, called practical persons; anciently, believers.

Of the first two classes I have only this to note,—that we ought neither to say that a person sees, if he sees falsely, nor speaks, if he speaks falsely. For seeing falsely is worse than blindness, and speaking falsely, than silence. A man who is too dim-sighted to discern the road from the ditch, may feel which is which;—but if the ditch appears manifestly to him to be the road, and the road to be the ditch, what shall become of him? False seeing is unseeing,—on the negative side of blindness; and false speaking, unspeaking,—on the negative side of silence.

To the persons who think, also, the same test applies very shrewdly. Theirs is a dangerous profession; and from the time of the Aristophanes thought-shop to the great German establishment, or thought-manufactory, whose productions have, unhappily, taken in part the place of the older and more serviceable commodities of Nuremberg toys and Berlin wool, it has been often harmful enough to mankind. It should not be so, for a false thought is more distinctly and visibly no thought than a false saying is no saying. But it is touching the two great productive classes of the doers and makers, that we have one or two important points to note here.

§ 15. Has the reader ever considered, carefully, what is the meaning of "doing" a thing?

Suppose a rock falls from a hill-side, crushes a group of cottages, and kills a number of people. The stone has produced a great effect in the world. If any one

asks, respecting the broken roofs, "What did it?" you say the stone did it. Yet you don't talk of the deed of the stone. If you inquire farther, and find that a goat had been feeding beside the rock, and had loosened it by gnawing the roots of the grasses beneath, you find the goat to be the active cause of the calamity, and you say the goat did it. Yet you don't call the goat the doer, nor talk of its evil deed. But if you find any one went up to the rock, in the night, and with deliberate purpose loosened it, that it might fall on the cottages, you say in quite a different sense, "It is his deed: he is the doer of it."

§ 16. It appears, then, that deliberate purpose and resolve are needed to constitute a deed or doing, in the true sense of the word; and that when, accidentally or mechanically, events take place without such purpose, we have indeed effects or results, and agents or causes, but neither deeds nor doers.

Now it so happens, as we all well know, that by far the largest part of things happening in practical life *are* brought about with no deliberate purpose. There are always a number of people who have the nature of stones; they fall on other persons and crush them. Some again have the nature of weeds, and twist about other people's feet and entangle them. More have the nature of logs, and lie in the way, so that everyone falls over them. And most of all have the nature of thorns, and set themselves by waysides, so that every passer-by must be torn, and all good seed choked; or perhaps make wonderful crackling under various pots, even to the extent of practically boiling water and working pistons. All these people produce immense and sorrowful effect in the world. Yet none of them are doers: it is their nature to crush, impede, and prick: but deed is not in them.*

* We may, perhaps, expediently recollect as much of our botany as to teach us that there may be sharp and rough persons, like spines,

§ 17. And farther, observe, that even when some effect is finally intended, you cannot call it the person's deed, unless it is *what* he intended.

If an ignorant person, purposing evil, accidentally does good (as if a thief's disturbing a family should lead them to discover in time that their house was on fire); or *vice versâ*, if an ignorant person intending good, accidentally does evil (as if a child should give hemlock to his companions for celery), in neither case do you call them the doers of what may result. So that in order to a true deed, it is necessary that the effect of it should be foreseen. Which, ultimately, it cannot be, but by a person who knows, and in his deed obeys, the laws of the universe, and of its Maker. And this knowledge is in its highest form, respecting the will of the Ruling Spirit, called Trust. For it is not the knowledge that a thing is, but that, according to the promise and nature of the Ruling Spirit, a thing will be. Also obedience in its highest form is not obedience to a constant and compulsory law, but a persuaded or voluntary yielded obedience to an issued command; and so far as it was a *persuaded* submission to command, it was anciently called, in a passive sense, "persuasion," or πίστις, and in so far as it alone assuredly did, and it alone *could* do, what it meant to do, and was therefore the root and essence of all human deed, it was called by the Latins the "doing," or *fides*, which has passed into the French *foi* and the English *faith*. And therefore because in His doing always certain, and in His speaking always true, His name who leads the armies of Heaven is "Faithful and True," * and all deeds which are done in alliance

who yet have good in them, and are essentially branches, and can bud. But the true thorny person is no spine, only an excrescence; rootless evermore,—leafless evermore. No crown made of such can ever meet glory of Angel's hand. (In Memoriam, lxviii.)

* "True," means, etymologically, not "consistent with fact," but "which may be trusted." "This is a true saying, and worthy of

with those armies, be they small or great, are essentially deeds of faith, which therefore, and in this one stern, eternal, sense, subdues all kingdoms, and turns to flight the armies of the aliens, and is at once the source and the substance of all human deed, rightly so called.

§ 18. Thus far then of practical persons, once called believers, as set forth in the last word of the noblest group of words ever, so far as I know, uttered by simple man concerning his practice, being the final testimony of the leaders of a great practical nation, whose deed thenceforward became an example of deed to mankind:

> Ω ξεῖν', ἀγγέλλειν Λακεδαιμονίοις, ὅτι τῇδε
> Κείμεθα, τοῖς κείνων ῥήμασί πειθόμενοι.

"O stranger! (we pray thee), tell the Lacedæmonians that we are lying here, having *obeyed* their words."

§ 19. What, let us ask next, is the ruling character of the person who produces—the creator or maker, anciently called the poet?

We have seen what a deed is. What then is a "creation"? Nay, it may be replied, to "create" cannot be said of man's labor.

On the contrary, it not only can be said, but is and must be said continually. You certainly do not talk of creating a watch, or creating a shoe; nevertheless you *do* talk of creating a feeling. Why is this?

Look back to the greatest of all creation, that of the world. Suppose the trees had been ever so well or so ingeniously put together, stem and leaf, yet if they had not been able to grow, would they have been well created? Or suppose the fish had been cut and stitched finely out of skin and whalebone; yet, cast upon the waters, had not been able to swim? Or suppose Adam

all acceptation," etc., meaning a trusty saying,—a saying to be rested on, leant upon.

and Eve had been made in the softest clay, ever so neatly, and set at the foot of the tree of knowledge, fastened up to it, quite unable to fall, or do anything else, would they have been well created, or in any true sense created at all?

§ 20. It will, perhaps, appear to you, after a little farther thought, that to create anything in reality is to put life into it.

A poet, or creator, is therefore a person who puts things together, not as a watchmaker steel, or a shoemaker leather, but who puts life into them.

His work is essentially this: it is the gathering and arranging of material by imagination, so as to have in it at last the harmony or helpfulness of life, and the passion or emotion of life. Mere fitting and adjustment of material is nothing; that is watchmaking. But helpful and passionate harmony, essentially choral harmony, so called from the Greek word "rejoicing," * is the harmony of Apollo and the Muses; the word Muse and Mother being derived from the same root, meaning "passionate seeking," or love, of which the issue is passionate finding, or sacred INVENTION. For which reason I could not bear to use any baser word than this of invention. And if the reader will think over all these things, and follow them out, as I think he may easily with this much of clew given him, he will not any more think it wrong in me to place invention so high among the powers of man.†

Or any more think it strange that the last act of the

* Χορούς τε ὠνομακέναι παρὰ τῆς χαρᾶς ἔμφυτον ὄνομα. (De leg. II. 1.)

† This being, indeed, among the visiblest signs of the Divine or immortal life. We have got a base habit of opposing the word "mortal" or "deathful" merely to "*im*-mortal;" whereas it is essentially contrary to "divine" (to θεῖος, not to ἀθάνατος, Phaedo, 66), that which is deathful being anarchic or disobedient, and that which is divine ruling and obedient; this being the true distinction between flesh and spirit.

life of Socrates † should have been to purify himself from the sin of having negligently listened to the voice within him, which, through all his past life, had bid him "labor, and make harmony."

‡ Πολλάκις μοι φοιτῶν τὸ αὐτὸ ἐνύπνιον ἐν τῷ παρελθόντι βίῳ, ἄλλοτ' ἐν ἄλλῃ ἰ̈ψει φαινόμενον, τὰ αὐτὰ δὲ λέγον, Ω Σώκρατες, ἔφη, μουδικὴν ποίει καὶ ἐργάζου. (Phaedo, 11.)

PLATE LXXIII.—LOIRE-SIDE.

CHAPTER II.

THE TASK OF THE LEAST.

§ 1. The reader has probably been surprised at my assertions made often before now, and reiterated here, that the *minutest* portion of a great composition is helpful to the whole. It certainly does not seem easily conceivable that this should be so. I will go farther, and say that it is inconceivable. But it is the fact.

We shall discern it to be so by taking one or two compositions to pieces, and examining the fragments. In doing which, we must remember that a great composition always has a leading emotional purpose, technically called its motive, to which all its lines and forms have some relation. Undulating lines, for instance, are expressive of action; and would be false in effect if the motive of the picture was one of repose. Horizontal and angular lines are expressive of rest and strength; and would destroy a design whose purpose was to express disquiet and feebleness. It is therefore necessary to ascertain the motive before descending to the detail.

§ 2. One of the simplest subjects, in the series of the Rivers of France, is "Rietz, near Saumur." The published Plate gives a better rendering than usual of its tone of light; and my rough etching, Plate 73, sufficiently shows the arrangement of its lines. What is their motive?

To get at it completely, we must know something of the Loire.

The district through which it here flows is, for the most part, a low place, yet not altogether at the level of the stream, but cut into steep banks of chalk or gravel, thirty or forty feet high, running for miles at about an equal height above the water.

These banks are excavated by the peasantry, partly for houses, partly for cellars, so economizing vineyard space above; and thus a kind of continuous village runs along the river-side, composed half of caves, half of rude buildings, backed by the cliff, propped against it, therefore always leaning away from the river; mingled with overlappings of vineyard trellis from above, and little towers or summer-houses for outlook, when the grapes are ripe, or for gossip over the garden wall.

§ 3. It is an autumnal evening, then, by this Loire side. The day has been hot, and the air is heavy and misty still; the sunlight warm, but dim; the brown vine-leaves motionless: all else quiet. Not a sail in sight on the river,* its strong, noiseless current lengthening the stream of low sunlight.

The motive of the picture, therefore, is the expression of rude but perfect peace, slightly mingled with an indolent languor and despondency; the peace between intervals of enforced labor; happy, but listless, and having little care or hope about the future; cutting its home out of this gravel bank, and letting the vine and the river twine and undermine as they will; careless to mend or build, so long as the walls hold together, and the black fruit swells in the sunshine.

§ 4. To get this repose, together with rude stability, we have therefore horizontal lines and bold angles. The grand horizontal space and sweep of Turner's distant river show perhaps better in the etching than in the Plate; but depend wholly for value on the piece of near

* The sails in the engraving were put in to catch the public eye. There are none in the drawing.

wall. It is the vertical line of its dark side which drives the eye up into the distance, right against the horizontal, and so makes it felt, while the flatness of the stone prepares the eye to understand the flatness of the river. Farther: hide with your finger the little ring on that stone, and you will find the river has stopped flowing. That ring is to repeat the curved lines of the river bank, which expresses its line of current, and to bring the feeling of them down near us. On the other side of the road the horizontal lines are taken up again by the dark pieces of wood, without which we should still lose half our space.

Next: The repose is to be not only perfect, but indolent: the repose of out-wearied people: not caring much what becomes of them.

You see the road is covered with litter. Even the crockery is left outside the cottage to dry in the sun, after being washed up. The steps of the cottage door have been too high for comfort originally, only it was less trouble to cut three large stones than four or five small. They are now all aslope and broken, not repaired for years. Their weighty forms increase the sense of languor throughout the scene, and of stability also, because we feel how difficult it would be to stir them. The crockery has its work to do also;—the arched door on the left being necessary to show the great thickness of walls and the strength they require to prevent falling in of the cliff above;—as the horizontal lines must be diffused on the right, so this arch must be diffused on the left; and the large round plate on one side of the steps, with the two small ones on the other, are to carry down the element of circular curvature. Hide them, and see the result.

As they carry the arched group of forms down, the arched window-shutter diffuses it upwards, where all the lines of the distant buildings suggest one and the same

idea of disorderly and careless strength, mingling masonry with rock.

§ 5. So far of the horizontal and curved lines. How of the radiating ones? What has the black vine trellis got to do?

Lay a pencil or ruler parallel with its lines. You will find that they point to the massive building in the distance. To which, as nearly as is possible without at once showing the artifice, every other radiating line points also; almost ludicrously when it is once pointed out; even the curved line of the top of the terrace runs into it, and the last sweep of the river evidently leads to its base. And so nearly is it in the exact centre of the picture, that one diagonal from corner to corner passes through it, and the other only misses the base by the twentieth of an inch.

If you are accustomed to France, you will know in a moment by its outline that this massive building is an old church.

Without it, the repose would not have been essentially the laborer's rest—rest as of the Sabbath. Among all the groups of lines that point to it, two are principal: the first, those of the vine trellis: the second, those of the handles of the saw left in the beam:—the blessing of human life and its labor.

Whenever Turner wishes to express profound repose, he puts in the foreground some instrument of labor cast aside. See, in Rogers's Poems, the last vignette, "Datur hora quieti," with the plough in the furrow; and in the first vignette of the same book, the scythe on the shoulder of the peasant going home. (There is nothing about the scythe in the passage of the poem which this vignette illustrates.)

§ 6. Observe, farther, the outline of the church itself. As our habitations are, so is our church, evidently a heap of old, but massive, walls, patched, and repaired, and

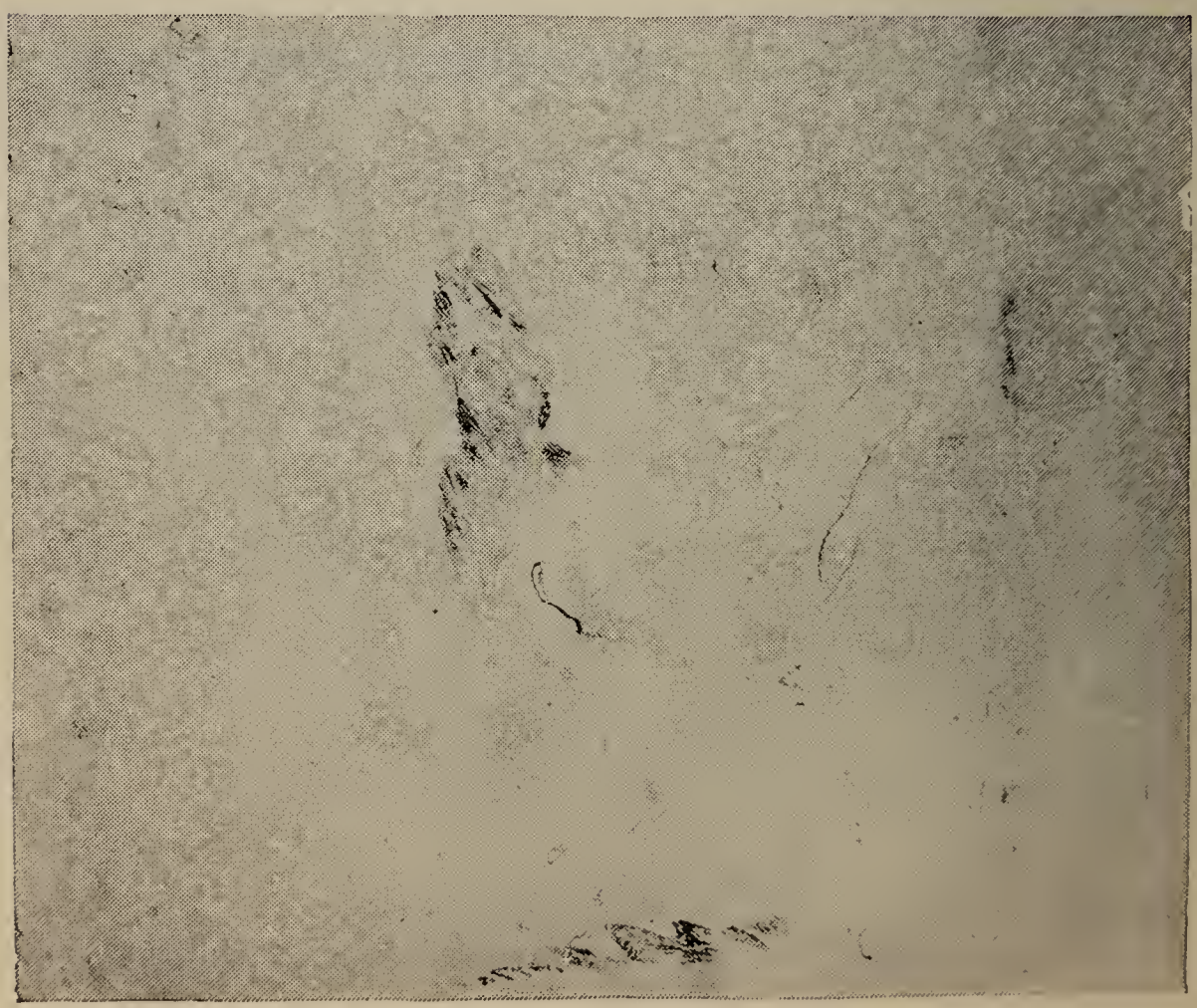


PLATE LXXIV.—THE MILLSTREAM.

roofed in, and over and over, until its original shape is hardly recognizable. I know the kind of church well—can tell even here, two miles off, that I shall find some Norman arches in the apse, and a flamboyant porch, rich and dark, with every statue broken out of it; and a rude wooden belfry above all; and a quantity of miserable shops built in among the buttresses; and that I may walk in and out as much as I please, but that how often soever, I shall always find some one praying at the Holy Sepulchre, in the darkest aisle, and my going in and out will not disturb them. For they *are* praying, which in many a handsomer and highlier-furbished edifice might, perhaps, not be so assuredly the case.

§ 7. Lastly: What kind of people have we on this winding road? Three indolent ones, leaning on the wall to look over into the gliding water; and a matron with her market panniers, by her figure, not a fast rider. The road, besides, is bad, and seems unsafe for trotting, and she has passed without disturbing the cat, who sits comfortably on the block of wood in the middle of it.

§ 8. Next to this piece of quietness, let us glance at a composition in which the motive is one of tumult: that of the Fall of Schaffhausen. It is engraved in the Keepsake. I have etched in Plate 74, at the top, the chief lines of its composition,* in which the first great purpose is to give swing enough to the water. The line of fall is straight and monotonous in reality. Turner wants to get the great concave sweep and rush of the river well felt, in spite of the unbroken form. The column of spray,

* These etchings of compositions are all reversed, for they are merely sketches on the steel, and I cannot sketch easily except straight from the drawing, and without reversing. The looking-glass plagues me with cross lights. As examples of composition, it does not the least matter which way they are turned; and the reader may see this Schaffhausen subject from the right side of the Rhine, by holding the book before a glass. The rude indications of the figures in the Loire subject are nearly facsimiles of Turner's.

rocks, mills, and bank, all radiate like a plume, sweeping round together in grand curves to the left, where the group of figures, hurried about the ferry-boat, rises like a dash of spray; they also radiating: so as to form one perfectly connected cluster, with the two gens-d'armes and the millstones; the millstones at the bottom being the root of it; the two soldiers laid right and left to sustain the branch of figures beyond, balanced just as a tree bough would be.

§ 9. One of the gens-d'armes is flirting with a young lady in a round cap and full sleeves, under pretence of wanting her to show him what she has in her bandbox. The motive of which flirtation is, so far as Turner is concerned in it, primarily the bandbox: this and the millstones below, give him a series of concave lines, which, concentrated by the recumbent soldiers, intensify the hollow sweep of the fall, precisely as the ring on the stone does the Loire eddies. These curves are carried out on the right by the small plate of eggs, laid to be washed at the spring; and, all these concave lines being a little too quiet and recumbent, the staggering casks are set on the left, and the ill-balanced milk-pail on the right, to give a general feeling of things being rolled over and over. The things which are to give this sense of rolling are dark, in order to hint at the way in which the cataract rolls boulders of rock; while the forms which are to give the sense of its sweeping force are white. The little spring, splashing out of its pine-trough, is to give contrast with the power of the fall, —while it carries out the general sense of splashing water.

§ 10. This spring exists on the spot, and so does everything else in the picture; but the combinations are wholly arbitrary; it being Turner's fixed principle to collect out of any scene whatever was characteristic, and put it together just as he liked. The changes made in

PLATE LXXV.—THE CASTLE OF LAUFFEN.

this instance are highly curious. The mills have no resemblance whatever to the real group as seen from this spot; for there is a vulgar and formal dwelling-house in front of them. But if you climb the rock behind them, you find they form on that side a towering cluster, which Turner has put with little modification into the drawing. What he has done to the mills, he has done with still greater audacity to the central rock. Seen from this spot, it shows, in reality, its greatest breadth, and is heavy and uninteresting; but on the Lauffen side, exposes its consumed base, worn away by the rush of water, which Turner resolving to show, serenely draws the rock as it appears from the other side of the Rhine, and brings that view of it over to this side. I have etched the bit with the rock a little larger below; and if the reader knows the spot, he will see that this piece of the drawing, reversed in the etching, is almost a bonâ fide unreversed study of the fall from the Lauffen side.*

Finally, the castle of Lauffen itself, being, when seen from this spot, too much foreshortened to show its extent, Turner walks a quarter of a mile lower down the river, draws the castle accurately there, brings it back with him, and puts it in all its extent, where he chooses to have it, beyond the rocks.

I tried to copy and engrave this piece of the drawing of its real size, merely to show the forms of the trees, drifted back by the breeze from the fall, and wet with its spray; but in the endeavor to facsimile the touches, great part of their grace and ease has been lost; still, Plate 75 may, if compared with the same piece in the Keepsake

* With the exception of the jagged ledge rising out of the foam below which comes from the north side, and is admirable in its expression of the position of the limestone-beds, which, rising from below the drift gravel of Constance, are the real cause of the fall of Schaffhausen.

engraving, at least show that the original drawing has not yet been rendered with completeness.

§ 11. These two examples may sufficiently serve to show the mode in which minor details, both in form and spirit, are used by Turner to aid his main motives; of course I cannot, in the space of this volume, go on examining subjects at this length, even if I had time to etch them; but every design of Turner's would be equally instructive, examined in a similar manner. Thus far, however, we have only seen the help of the parts to the whole: we must give yet a little attention to the mode of combining the smallest details.

I am always led away, in spite of myself, from my proper subject here, invention formal, or the merely pleasant placing of lines and masses, into the emotional results of such arrangement. The chief reason of this is that the emotional power can be explained; but the perfection of formative arrangement, as I said, cannot be explained, any more than that of melody in music. An instance or two of it, however, may be given.

§ 12. Much fine formative arrangement depends on a more or less elliptical or pear-shaped balance of the group, obtained by arranging the principal members of it on two opposite curves, and either centralizing it by some powerful feature at the base, centre, or summit; or else clasping it together by some conspicuous point or knot. A very small object will often do this satisfactorily.

If you can get the complete series of Lefèbre's engravings from Titian and Veronese, they will be quite enough to teach you, in their dumb way, everything that is teachable of composition; at all events, try to get the Madonna, with St. Peter and St. George under the two great pillars; the Madonna and Child, with mitred bishop on her left, and St. Andrew on her right; and Veronese's Triumph of Venice. The first of these Plates unites two formative symmetries; that of the two pillars, clasped

by the square altar-cloth below and cloud above, catches the eye first; but the main group is the fivefold one rising to the left, crowned by the Madonna. St. Francis

Fig. 94.

and St. Peter form its two wings, and the kneeling portrait figures, its base. It is clasped at the bottom by the key of St. Peter, which points straight at the Madonna's head, and is laid on the steps solely for this purpose; the

curved lines, which enclose the group, meet also in her face; and the straight line of light, on the cloak of the nearest senator, points at her also. If you have Turner's Liber Studiorum, turn to the Lauffenburg, and compare the figure group there: a fivefold chain, one standing figure, central; two recumbent, for wings; two half-recumbent, for bases; and a cluster of weeds to clasp. Then turn to Lefèbre's Europa (there are two in the series—I mean the one with the two tree trunks over her head). It is a wonderful ninefold group. Europa cen-

Fig. 95.

tral; two stooping figures, each surmounted by a standing one, for wings; a cupid on one side, and dog on the other, for bases; a cupid and trunk of tree, on each side, to terminate above; and a garland for clasp.

§ 13. Fig. 94, page 223, will serve to show the mode in which similar arrangements are carried into the smallest detail. It is magnified four times from a cluster of leaves in the foreground of the "Isis" (Liber Studiorum). Figs. 95, page 224, and 96, page 225, show the arrangement of the two groups composing it; the lower is purely symmetrical, with trefoiled centre and broad masses for wings; the uppermost is a sweeping continuous curve, symmetrical,

but foreshortened. Both are clasped by arrow-shaped leaves. The two whole groups themselves are, in turn, members of another larger group, composing the entire foreground, and consisting of broad dock-leaves, with minor clusters on the right and left, of which these form the chief portion on the right side.

§ 14. Unless every leaf, and every visible point or object, however small, forms a part of some harmony of

Fig. 33.

this kind (these symmetrical conditions being only the most simple and obvious), it has no business in the picture. It is the necessary connection of all the forms and colors, down to the last touch, which constitutes great or inventive work, separated from all common work by an impassable gulf.

By diligently copying the etchings of the Liber Studiorum, the reader may, however, easily attain the perception of the existence of these relations, and be prepared to understand Turner's more elaborate compo-

sition. It would take many figures to disentangle and explain the arrangements merely of the leaf cluster, Fig. 78, facing page 136; but that there *is* a system, and that every leaf has a fixed value and place in it, can hardly but be felt at a glance.

It is curious that, in spite of all the constant talkings of "composition" which go on among art students, true composition is just the last thing which appears to be perceived. One would have thought that in this group, at least, the value of the central black leaf would have been seen, of which the principal function is to point towards, and continue, the line of bank above. See Plate 63. But a glance at the published Plate in the England series will show that no idea of the composition had occurred to the engraver's mind. He thought lany eaves would do, and supplied them from his own repertory of hack vegetation.

§ 15. I would willingly enlarge farther on this subject —it is a favorite one with me; but the figures required for any exhaustive treatment of it would form a separate volume. All that I can do is to indicate, as these examples do sufficiently, the vast field open to the student's analysis if he cares to pursue the subject; and to mark for the general reader these two strong conclusions:—that nothing in great work is ever either fortuitous or contentious.

It is not fortuitous; that is to say, not left to fortune. The "must do it by a kind of felicity" of Bacon is true; it is true also that an accident is often suggestive to an inventor. Turner himself said, "I never lose an accident." But it is this not *losing* it, this taking things out of the hands of Fortune, and putting them into those of force and foresight, which attest the master. Chance may sometimes help, and sometimes provoke, a success; but must never rule, and rarely allure.

And, lastly, nothing must be contentious. Art has

many uses and many pleasantnesses; but of all its services, none are higher than its setting forth, by a visible and enduring image, the nature of all true authority and freedom; Authority which defines and directs the action of benevolent law; and Freedom which consists in deep and soft consent of individual * helpfulness.

* "Individual," that is to say, distinct and separate in character, though joined in purpose. I might have enlarged on this head, but that all I should care to say has been already said admirably by Mr. J. S. Mill in his essay on *Liberty*.

CHAPTER III.

THE RULE OF THE GREATEST.

§ 1. In the entire range of art principles, none perhaps present a difficulty so great to the student, or require from the teacher expression so cautious, and yet so strong, as those which concern the nature and influence of magnitude.

In one sense, and that deep, there is no such thing as magnitude. The least thing is as the greatest, and one day as a thousand years, in the eyes of the Maker of great and small things. In another sense, and that close to us and necessary, there exist both magnitude and value. Though not a sparrow falls to the ground unnoted, there are yet creatures who are of more value than many; and the same Spirit which weighs the dust of the earth in a balance, counts the isles as a little thing.

§ 2. The just temper of human mind in this matter may, nevertheless, be told shortly. Greatness can only be rightly estimated when minuteness is justly reverenced. Greatness is the aggregation of minuteness; nor can its sublimity be felt truthfully by any mind unaccustomed to the affectionate watching of what is least.

But if this affection for the least be unaccompanied by the powers of comparison and reflection; if it be intemperate in its thirst, restless in curiosity, and incapable of the patient and self-commandant pause which is wise to arrange, and submissive to refuse, it will close

the paths of noble art to the student as effectually, and hopelessly, as even the blindness of pride, or impatience of ambition.

§ 3. I say the paths of noble art, not of useful art. All accurate investigation will have its reward; the morbid curiosity will at least slake the thirst of others, if not its own; and the diffused and petty affections will distribute, in serviceable measure, their minute delights and narrow discoveries. The opposite error, the desire of greatness as such, or rather of what appears great to indolence and vanity;—the instinct which I have described in the "Seven Lamps," noting it, among the Renaissance builders, to be an especial and unfailing sign of baseness of mind, is as fruitless as it is vile; no way profitable—every way harmful: the widest and most corrupting expression of vulgarity. The microscopic drawing of an insect may be precious; but nothing except disgrace and misguidance will ever be gathered from such work as that of Haydon or Barry.

§ 4. The work I have mostly had to do, since this essay was begun, has been that of contention against such debased issues of swollen insolence and windy conceit; but I have noticed lately, that some lightly-budding philosophers have depreciated true greatness; confusing the relations of scale, as they bear upon human instinct and morality; reasoning as if a mountain were no nobler than a grain of sand, or as if many souls were not of mightier interest than one. To whom it must be shortly answered that the Lord of power and life knew which were His noblest works, when He bade His servant watch the play of the Leviathan, rather than dissect the spawn of the minnow; and that when it comes to practical question whether a single soul is to be jeoparded for many, and this Leonidas, or Curtius, or Winkelried shall abolish—so far as abolishable—his own spirit, that he may save more numerous spirits,

such question is to be solved by the simple human instinct respecting number and magnitude, not by reasonings on infinity :—

" Le navigateur qui, la nuit, voit l'océan étinceler de lumière, danser en guirlandes de feu, s'égaye d'abord de ce spectacle. Il fait dix lieues : la guirlande s'allonge indéfiniment, elle s'agite, se tord, se noue, aux mouvements de la lame ; c'est un serpent monstrueux qui va toujours s'allongeant, jusqu'à trente lieues, quarante lieues. Et tout cela n'est qu'une danse d'animalcules imperceptibles. En quel nombre ? A cette question l'imagination s'effraye ; elle sent là une nature de puissance immense, de richesse épouvantable. . . . Que sont ces petits des petits ? Rien moins que les constructeurs du globe où nous sommes. De leurs corps, de leurs débris, ils ont préparé le sol qui est sous nos pas. . . . Et ce sont les plus petits qui ont fait les plus grandes choses. L'imperceptible rhizopode s'est bâti un monument bien autre que les pyramides, pas moins que l'Italie centrale, une notable partie de la chaîne des Apennins. Mais c'était trop peu encore ; les masses énormes du Chili, les prodigieuses Cordillières, qui regardent le monde à leurs pieds, sont le monument funéraire où cet être insaisissable, et pour ainsi dire, invisible, a enseveli les débris de son espèce disparue."—(Michelet : *L'Insecte.*)

§ 5. In these passages, and those connected with them in the chapter from which they are taken, itself so vast in scope and therefore so sublime, we may perhaps find the true relations of minuteness, multitude, and magnitude. We shall not feel that there is no such thing as littleness, or no such thing as magnitude. Nor shall we be disposed to confuse a Volvox with the Cordilleras ; but we may learn that they both are bound together by

links of eternal life and toil; we shall see the vastest thing noble, chiefly for what it includes; and the meanest for what it accomplishes. Thence we might gather —and the conclusion will be found in experience true— that the sense of largeness would be most grateful to minds capable of comprehending, balancing, and comparing; but capable also of great patience and expectation; while the sense of minute wonderfulness would be attractive to minds acted upon by sharp, small, penetrative sympathies, and apt to be impatient, irregular, and partial. This fact is curiously shown in the relations between the temper of the great composers and the modern pathetic school. I was surprised at the first rise of that school, now some years ago, by observing how they restrained themselves to subjects which in other hands would have been wholly uninteresting (compare Vol. IV., p. 36); and in their succeeding efforts, I saw with increasing wonder, that they were almost destitute of the power of feeling vastness, or enjoying the forms which expressed it. A mountain or great building only appeared to them as a piece of color of a certain shape. The powers it represented, or included, were invisible to them. In general they avoided subjects expressing space or mass, and fastened on confined, broken, and sharp forms; liking furze, fern, reeds, straw, stubble, dead leaves, and such like, better than strong stones, broad-flowing leaves, or rounded hills: in all such greater things, when forced to paint them, they missed the main and mighty lines; and this no less in what they loved than in what they disliked; for though fond of foliage, their trees always had a tendency to congeal into little acicular thorn-hedges, and never tossed free. Which modes of choice proceed naturally from a petulant sympathy with local and immediately visible interests or sorrows, not regarding their large consequences, nor capable of understanding more mas-

sive view or more deeply deliberate mercifulness;—but peevish and horror-struck, and often incapable of self-control, though not of self-sacrifice. There are more people who can forget themselves than govern themselves.

This narrowly pungent and bitter virtue has, however, its beautiful uses, and is of special value in the present day, when surface-work, shallow generalization, and cold arithmetical estimates of things, are among the chief dangers and causes of misery which men have to deal with.

§ 6. On the other hand, and in clear distinction from all such workers, it is to be remembered that the great composers, not less deep in feeling, are in the fixed habit of regarding as much the relations and positions, as the separate nature, of things; that they reap and thrash in the sheaf, never pluck ears to rub in the hand; fish with net, not line, and sweep their prey together within great cords of errorless curve;—that nothing ever bears to them a separate or isolated aspect, but leads or links a chain of aspects—that to them it is not merely the surface, nor the substance, of anything that is of import; but its circumference and continence: that they are pre-eminently patient and reserved; observant, not curious;—comprehensive, not conjectural; calm exceedingly; unerring, constant, terrible in steadfastness of intent; unconquerable: incomprehensible: always suggesting, implying, including, more than can be told.

§ 7. And this may be seen down to their treatment of the smallest things.

For there is nothing so small but we may, as we choose, see it in the whole, or in part, and in subdued connection with other things, or in individual and petty prominence. The greatest treatment is always that which gives conception the widest range, and most harmonious guidance;—it being permitted us to employ a

certain quantity of time, and certain number of touches of pencil—he who with these embraces the largest sphere of thought, and suggests within that sphere the most perfect order of thought, has wrought the most wisely, and therefore most nobly.

§ 8. I do not, however, purpose here to examine or illustrate the nature of great treatment—to do so effectually would need many examples from the figure composers; and it will be better (if I have time to work out the subject carefully) that I should do so in a form which may be easily accessible to young students. Here I will only state in conclusion what it is chiefly important for all students to be convinced of, that all the technical qualities by which greatness of treatment is known, such as reserve in color, tranquillity and largeness of line, and refusal of unnecessary objects of interest, are, when they are real, the exponents of an habitually noble temper of mind, never the observances of a precept supposed to be useful. The refusal or reserve of a mighty painter cannot be imitated; it is only by reaching the same intellectual strength that you will be able to give an equal dignity to your self-denial. No one can tell you beforehand what to accept, or what to ignore; only remember always, in painting as in eloquence, the greater your strength, the quieter will be your manner, and the fewer your words; and in painting, as in all the arts and acts of life, the secret of high success will be found, not in a fretful, and various excellence, but in a quiet singleness of justly chosen aim.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LAW OF PERFECTNESS.

§ 1. Among the several characteristics of great treatment which in the last chapter were alluded to without being enlarged upon, one will be found several times named;—reserve.

It is necessary for our present purpose that we should understand this quality more distinctly. I mean by it the power which a great painter exercises over himself in fixing certain limits, either of force, of color, or of quantity of work;—limits which he will not transgress in any part of his picture, even though here and there a painful sense of incompletion may exist, under the fixed conditions, and might tempt an inferior workman to infringe them. The nature of this reserve we must understand in order that we may also determine the nature of true completion or perfectness, which is the end of composition.

§ 2. For perfectness, properly so called, means harmony. The word signifies, literally, the doing our work *thoroughly*. It does not mean carrying it up to any constant and established degree of finish, but carrying the whole of it up to a degree determined upon. In a chalk or pencil sketch by a great master, it will often be found that the deepest shades are feeble tints of pale gray; the outlines nearly invisible, and the forms brought out by a ghostly delicacy of touch, which, on looking close to the paper, will be indistinguishable from its general

texture. A single line of ink, occurring anywhere in such a drawing, would of course destroy it; placed in the darkness of a mouth or nostril, it would turn the expression into a caricature; on a cheek or brow it would be simply a blot. Yet let the blot remain, and let the master work up to it with lines of similar force; and the drawing which was before perfect, in terms of pencil, will become, under his hand, perfect in terms of ink; and what was before a scratch on the cheek will become a necessary and beautiful part of its gradation.

All great work is thus reduced under certain conditions, and its right to be called complete depends on its fulfilment of them, not on the nature of the conditions chosen. Habitually, indeed, we call a colored work which is satisfactory to us, finished, and a chalk drawing unfinished; but in the mind of the master, all his work is, according to the sense in which you use the word, equally perfect or imperfect. Perfect, if you regard its purpose and limitation; imperfect, if you compare it with the natural standard. In what appears to you consummate, the master has assigned to himself terms of shortcoming, and marked with a sad severity the point up to which he will permit himself to contend with nature. Were it not for his acceptance of such restraint, he could neither quit his work, nor endure it. He could not quit it, for he would always perceive more that might be done; he could not endure it, because all doing ended only in more elaborate deficiency.

§ 3. But we are apt to forget, in modern days, that the reserve of a man who is not putting forth half his strength is different in manner and dignity from the effort of one who can do no more. Charmed, and justly charmed, by the harmonious sketches of great painters, and by the grandeur of their acquiescence in the point of pause, we have put ourselves to produce sketches as an end instead of a means, and thought to imi-

tate the painter's scornful restraint of his own power, by a scornful rejection of the things beyond ours. For many reasons, therefore, it becomes desirable to understand precisely and finally what a good painter means by completion.

§ 4. The sketches of true painters may be classed under the following heads:—

I. *Experimental.*—In which they are assisting an imperfect conception of a subject by trying the look of it on paper in different ways.

By the greatest men this kind of sketch is hardly ever made; they conceive their subjects distinctly at once, and their sketch is not to try them, but to fasten them down. Raphael's form the only important exception—and the numerous examples of experimental work by him are evidence of his composition being technical rather than imaginative. I have never seen a drawing of the kind by any great Venetian. Among the nineteen thousand sketches by Turner—which I arranged in the National Gallery—there was, to the best of my recollection, *not one.* In several instances the work, after being carried forward a certain length, had been abandoned and begun again with another view; sometimes also two or more modes of treatment had been set side by side with a view to choice. But there were always two distinct imaginations contending for realization—not experimental modifications of one.

§ 5. II. *Determinant.*—The fastening down of an idea in the simplest terms, in order that it may not be disturbed or confused by after-work. Nearly all the great composers do this, methodically, before beginning a painting. Such sketches are usually in a high degree resolute and compressive; the best of them outlined or marked calmly with the pen, and deliberately washed with color, indicating the places of the principal lights.

Fine drawings of this class never show any hurry or

confusion. They are the expression of concluded operations of mind, are drawn slowly, and are not so much sketches, as maps.

§ 6. III. *Commemorative.*—Containing records of facts which the master required. These in their most elaborate form are "studies," or drawings, from Nature, of parts needed in the composition, often highly finished in the part which is to be introduced. In this form, however, they never occur by the greatest imaginative masters. For by a truly great inventor everything is invented: no atom of the work is unmodified by his mind; and no study from nature, however beautiful, could be introduced by him into his design without change; it would not fit with the rest. Finished studies for introduction are therefore chiefly by Leonardo and Raphael, both technical designers rather than imaginative ones.

Commemorative sketches, by great masters, are generally hasty, merely to put them in mind of motives of invention, or they are shorthand memoranda of things with which they do not care to trouble their memory; or, finally, accurate notes of things which they must *not* modify by invention, as local detail, costume, and such like. You may find perfectly accurate drawings of coats of arms, portions of dresses, pieces of architecture, and so on, by all the great men; but you will not find elaborate studies of bits of their pictures.

§ 7. When the sketch is made merely as a memorandum, it is impossible to say how little, or what kind of drawing, may be sufficient for the purpose. It is of course likely to be hasty from its very nature, and unless the exact purpose be understood, it may be as unintelligible as a piece of shorthand writing. For instance, in the corner of a sheet of sketches made at sea, among those of Turner, at the National Gallery, occurs this one, Fig. 97. I suppose most persons would not see much

use in it. It nevertheless was probably one of the most important sketches made in Turner's life, fixing forever in his mind certain facts respecting the sunrise from a

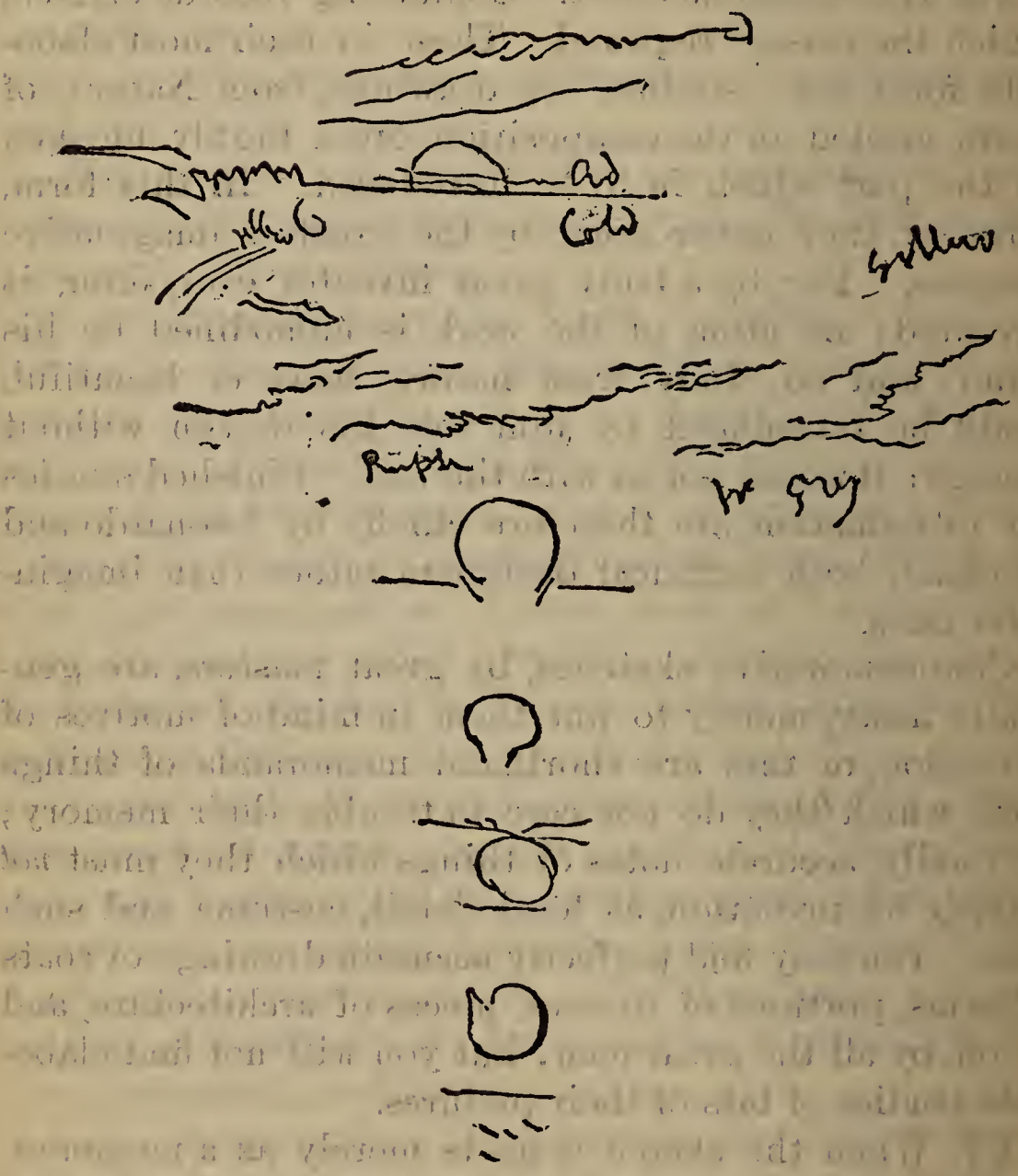


Fig. 97.

clear sea-horizon. Having myself watched such sunrise, occasionally, I perceive this sketch to mean as follows: (Half circle at the top.) When the sun was only half out of the sea, the horizon was sharply traced across its disk, and red streaks of vapor crossed the lower part of it.

Fig. 95.

(Horseshoe underneath.) When the sun had risen so far as to show three-quarters of its diameter, its light became so great as to conceal the sea-horizon, consuming it away in descending rays.

(Smaller horseshoe below.) When on the point of detaching itself from the horizon, the sun still consumed away the line of the sea, and looked as if pulled down by it.

(Broken oval.) Having risen about a fourth of its diameter above the horizon, the sea-line reappeared; but the risen orb was flattened by refraction into an oval.

(Broken circle.) Having risen a little farther above the sea-line, the sun, at last, got itself round, and all right, with sparkling reflection on the waves just below the sea-line.

This memorandum is for its purpose entirely perfect and efficient, though the sun is not drawn carefully round, but with a dash of the pencil; but there is no affected or desired slightness. Could it have been drawn round as instantaneously, it would have been. The purpose is throughout determined; there is no scrawling, as in vulgar sketching.*

§ 8. Again, Fig. 98 is a facsimile of one of Turner's "memoranda," of a complete subject,† Lausanne, from the road to Fribourg.

This example is entirely characteristic of his usual drawings from nature, which unite two characters, being *both* commemorative and determinant:—Commemorative,

* The word in the uppermost note, to the right of the sun, is "red;" the others, "yellow," "purple," "cold" light gray. He always noted the colors of the skies in this way.

† It is not so good a facsimile as those I have given from Durer, for the original sketch is in light pencil; and the thickening and delicate emphasis of the lines, on which nearly all the beauty of the drawing depended, cannot be expressed in the woodcut, though marked by a double line as well as I could. But the figure will answer its purpose well enough in showing Turner's mode of sketching.

in so far as they note certain facts about the place: determinant, in that they record an impression received from the place there and then, together with the principal arrangement of the composition in which it was afterwards to be recorded. In this mode of sketching, Turner differs from all other men whose work I have studied. He never draws accurately on the spot, with the intention of modifying or composing afterwards from the materials; but instantly modifies as he draws, placing his memoranda where they are to be ultimately used, and taking exactly what he wants, not a fragment or line more.

§ 9. This sketch has been made in the afternoon. He had been impressed as he walked up the hill, by the vanishing of the lake in the golden horizon, without end of waters, and by the opposition of the pinnacled castle and cathedral to its level breadth. That must be drawn! and from this spot, where all the buildings are set well together. But it lucklessly happens that, though the buildings come just where he wants them in situation, they don't in height. For the castle (the square mass on the right) is in reality higher than the cathedral, and would block out the end of the lake. Down it goes instantly a hundred feet, that we may see the lake over it; without the smallest regard for the military position of Lausanne.

§ 10. Next: The last low spire on the left is in truth concealed behind the nearer bank, the town running far down the hill (and climbing another hill) in that direction. But the group of spires, without it, would not be rich enough to give a proper impression of Lausanne, as a spiry place. Turner quietly sends to fetch the church from round the corner, places it where he likes, and indicates its distance only by aërial perspective (much greater in the pencil drawing than in the woodcut).

§ 11. But again: Not only the spire of the lower

church, but the peak of the Rochers d'Enfer (that highest in the distance) would in reality be out of sight; it is much farther round to the left. This would never do either; for without it, we should have no idea that Lausanne was opposite the mountains, nor should we have a nice sloping line to lead us into the distance.

With the same unblushing tranquillity of mind in which he had ordered up the church, Turner sends also to fetch the Rochers d'Enfer; and puts *them* also where he chooses, to crown the slope of distant hill, which, as every traveller knows, in its decline to the west, is one of the most notable features of the view from Lausanne.

§ 12. These modifications, easily traceable in the large features of the design, are carried out with equal audacity and precision in every part of it. Every one of those confused lines on the right indicates something that is really there, only everything is shifted and sorted into the exact places that Turner chose. The group of dark objects near us at the foot of the bank is a cluster of mills, which, when the picture was completed, were to be the blackest things in it, and to throw back the castle, and the golden horizon; while the rounded touches at the bottom, under the castle, indicate a row of trees, which follow a brook coming out of the ravine behind us; and were going to be made very round indeed in the picture (to oppose the spiky and angular masses of castle) and very consecutive, in order to form another conducting line into the distance.

§ 13. These motives, or motives like them, might perhaps be guessed on looking at the sketch. But no one without going to the spot would understand the meaning of the vertical lines in the left-hand lowest corner.

They are a "memorandum" of the artificial verticalness of a low sandstone cliff, which has been cut down there to give space for a bit of garden belonging to a public-house beneath, from which garden a path leads

along the ravine to the Lausanne rifle-ground. The value of these vertical lines in repeating those of the cathedral is very great; it would be greater still in the completed picture, increasing the sense of looking down from a height, and giving grasp of, and power over, the whole scene.

§ 14. Throughout the sketch, as in all that Turner made, the observing and combining intellect acts in the same manner. Not a line is lost, nor a moment of time; and though the pencil flies, and the whole thing is literally done as fast as a piece of short-hand writing, it is to the full as purposeful and compressed, so that while there are indeed dashes of the pencil which are unintentional, they are only unintentional as the form of a letter is, in fast writing, not from want of intention, but from the accident of haste.

§ 15. I know not if the reader can understand,—I myself cannot, though I see it to be demonstrable,—the simultaneous occurrence of idea which produces such a drawing as this: the grasp of the whole, from the laying of the first line, which induces continual modifications of all that is done, out of respect to parts not done yet. No line is ever changed or effaced: no experiment made; but every touch is placed with reference to all that are to succeed, as to all that have gone before; every addition takes its part, as the stones in an arch of a bridge; the last touch locks the arch. Remove that keystone, or remove any other of the stones of the vault, and the whole will fall.

§ 16. I repeat—the power of mind which accomplishes this, is yet wholly inexplicable to me, as it was when first I defined it in the chapter on imagination associative, in the second volume. But the grandeur of the power impresses me daily more and more; and, in quitting the subject of invention, let me assert finally, in clearest and strongest terms, that no painting is of any

true imaginative perfectness at all, unless it has been thus conceived.

One sign of its being thus conceived may be always found in the straightforwardness of its work. There are continual disputes among artists as to the best way of doing things, which may nearly all be resolved into confessions of indetermination. If you know precisely what you want, you will not feel much hesitation in setting about it; and a picture may be painted almost any way, so only that it can be a straight way. Give a true painter a ground of black, white, scarlet, or green, and out of it he will bring what you choose. From the black, brightness; from the white, sadness; from the scarlet, coolness; from the green, glow: he will make anything out of anything, but in each case his method will be pure, direct, perfect, the shortest and simplest possible. You will find him, moreover, indifferent as to succession of process. Ask him to begin at the bottom of the picture instead of the top,—to finish two square inches of it without touching the rest, or to lay a separate ground for every part before finishing any;—it is all the same to him! What he will do if left to himself, depends on mechanical convenience, and on the time at his disposal. If he has a large brush in his hand, and plenty of one color ground, he may lay as much as is wanted of that color, at once, in every part of the picture where it is to occur; and if any is left, perhaps walk to another canvas, and lay the rest of it where it will be wanted on that. If, on the contrary, he has a small brush in his hand, and is interested in a particular spot of the picture, he will, perhaps, not stir from it till that bit is finished. But the absolutely best, or centrally, and entirely *right* way of painting is as follows:—

§ 17. A light ground, white, red, yellow, or gray, not brown, or black. On that an entirely accurate, and firm black outline of the whole picture, in its principal

masses. The outline to be exquisitely correct as far as it reaches, but not to include small details; the use of it being to limit the masses of first color. The ground colors then to be laid firmly, each on its own proper part of the picture, as inlaid work in a mosaic table, meeting each other truly at the edges: as much of each being laid as will get itself into the state which the artist requires it to be in for his second painting, by the time he comes to it. On this first color, the second colors and subordinate masses laid in due order, now, of course, necessarily without previous outline, and all small detail reserved to the last, the bracelet being not touched, nor indicated in the least, till the arm is finished.*

§ 18. This is, as far as it can be expressed in few words, the right, or Venetian way of painting; but it is incapable of absolute definition, for it depends on the scale, the material, and the nature of the object represented, *how much* a great painter will do with his first color; or how many after-processes he will use. Very often the first color, richly blended and worked into, is also the last; sometimes it wants a glaze only to modify it; sometimes an entirely different color above it. Turner's storm-blues, for instance, were produced by a black ground, with opaque blue, mixed with white, struck over it.† The amount of detail given in the first color

* Thus, in the Holy Family of Titian, lately purchased for the National Gallery, the piece of St. Catherine's dress over her shoulders is painted on the under dress, after that was dry. All its value would have been lost, had the slightest tint or trace of it been given previously. This picture, I think, and certainly many of Tintoret's, are painted on dark grounds; but this is to save time, and with some loss to the future brightness of the color.

† In cleaning the "Hero and Leander," now in the National collection, these upper glazes were taken off, and only the black ground left. I remember the picture when its distance was of the most exquisite blue. I have no doubt the "Fire at Sea" has had its distance destroyed in the same manner.

will also depend on convenience. For instance, if a jewel *fastens* a fold of dress, a Venetian will lay probably a piece of the jewel color in its place at the time he draws the fold; but if the jewel *falls upon* the dress, he will paint the folds only in the ground color, and the jewel afterwards. For in the first case his hand must pause, at any rate, where the fold is fastened; so that he may as well mark the color of the gem: but he would have to check his hand in the sweep with which he drew the drapery, if he painted a jewel that fell upon it with the first color. So far, however, as he can possibly use the under color, he will, in whatever he has to superimpose. There is a pretty little instance of such economical work in the painting of the pearls on the breast of the elder princess, in our best Paul Veronese (Family of Darius). The lowest is about the size of a small hazel-nut, and falls on her rose-red dress. Any other but a Venetian would have put a complete piece of white paint over the dress, for the whole pearl, and painted into that the colors of the stone. But Veronese knows beforehand that all the dark side of the pearl will reflect the red of the dress. He will not put white over the red, only to put red over the white again. He leaves the actual dress for the dark side of the pearl, and with two small separate touches, one white, another brown, places its high light and shadow. This he does with perfect care and calm; but in two decisive seconds. There is no dash, nor display, nor hurry, nor error. The exactly right thing is done in the exactly right place, and not one atom of color, nor moment of time spent vainly. Look close at the two touches,—you wonder what they mean. Retire six feet from the picture—the pearl is there!

§ 19. The degree in which the ground colors are extended over his picture, as he works, is to a great painter absolutely indifferent. It is all the same to him

whether he grounds a head, and finishes it at once to the shoulders, leaving all round it white; or whether he grounds the whole picture. His harmony, paint as he will, never can be complete till the last touch is given; so long as it remains incomplete, he does not care how little of it is suggested, or how many notes are missing. All is wrong till all is right; and he must be able to bear the all-wrongness till his work is done, or he cannot paint at all. His mode of treatment will, therefore, depend on the nature of his subject; as is beautifully shown in the water-color sketches by Turner in the National Gallery. His general system was to complete inch by inch; leaving the paper quite white all round, especially if the work was to be delicate. The most exquisite drawings left unfinished in the collection—those at Rome and Naples—are thus outlined accurately on pure white paper, begun in the middle of the sheet, and worked out to the side, finishing as he proceeds. If, however, any united effect of light or color is to embrace a large part of the subject, he will lay it in with a broad wash over the whole paper at once; then paint into it using it as a ground, and modifying it in the pure Venetian manner. His oil pictures were laid roughly with ground colors, and painted into with such rapid skill, that the artists who used to see him finishing at the Academy sometimes suspected him of having the picture finished underneath the colors he showed, and removing, instead of adding, as they watched.

§ 20. But, whatever the means used may be, the certainty and directness of them imply absolute grasp of the whole subject, and without this grasp there is no good painting. This, finally, let me declare, without qualification—that partial conception is no conception. The whole picture must be imagined, or none of it is. And this grasp of the whole implies very strange

and sublime qualities of mind. It is not possible, unless the feelings are completely under control; the least excitement or passion will disturb the measured equity of power; a painter needs to be as cool as a general; and as little moved or subdued by his sense of pleasure as a soldier by the sense of pain. Nothing good can be done without intense feeling; but it must be feeling so crushed, that the work is set about with mechanical steadiness, absolutely untroubled, as a surgeon,—not without pity, but conquering it and putting it aside—begins an operation. Until the feelings can give strength enough to the will to enable it to conquer them, they are not strong enough. If you cannot leave your picture at any moment;—cannot turn from it and go on with another, while the color is drying;—cannot work at any part of it you choose with equal contentment—you have not firm enough grasp of it.

§ 21. It follows also, that no vain or selfish person can possibly paint, in the noble sense of the word. Vanity and selfishness are troublous, eager, anxious, petulant;—painting can only be done in calm of mind. Resolution is not enough to secure this; it must be secured by disposition as well. You may resolve to think of your picture only; but, if you have been fretted before beginning, no manly or clear grasp of it will be possible for you. No forced calm is calm enough. Only honest calm,—natural calm. You might as well try by external pressure to smoothe a lake till it could reflect the sky, as by violence of effort to secure the peace through which only you can reach imagination. That peace must come in its own time; as the waters settle themselves into clearness as well as quietness; you can no more filter your mind into purity than you can compress it into calmness; you must keep it pure, if you would have it pure; and throw no stones into it, if you would have it quiet. Great courage and self-

command may, to a certain extent, give power of painting without the true calmness underneath; but never of doing first-rate work. There is sufficient evidence of this, in even what we know of great men, though of the greatest, we nearly always know the least (and that necessarily; they being very silent, and not much given to setting themselves forth to questioners; apt to be contemptuously reserved, no less than unselfishly). But in such writings and sayings as we possess of theirs, we may trace a quite curious gentleness and serene courtesy. Rubens' letters are almost ludicrous in their unhurried politeness. Reynolds, swiftest of painters, was gentlest of companions; so also Velasquez, Titian, and Veronese.

§ 22. It is gratuitous to add that no shallow or petty person can paint. Mere cleverness or special gift never made an artist. It is only perfectness of mind, unity, depth, decision, the highest qualities, in fine, of the intellect, which will form the imagination.

§ 23. And, lastly, no false person can paint. A person false at heart may, when it suits his purposes, seize a stray truth here or there; but the relations of truth,—its perfectness,—that which makes it wholesome truth, he can never perceive. As wholeness and wholesomeness go together, so also sight with sincerity; it is only the constant desire of, and submissiveness to truth, which can measure its strange angles and mark its infinite aspects; and fit them and knit them into the strength of sacred invention.

Sacred, I call it deliberately; for it is thus, in the most accurate senses, humble as well as helpful; meek in its receiving, as magnificent in its disposing; the name it bears being rightly given to invention formal, not because it forms, but because it finds. For you cannot find a lie; you must make it for yourself. False things may be imagined, and false things composed; but only truth can be invented.

PART IX.

OF IDEAS OF RELATION:—II. OF INVENTION SPIRITUAL.

CHAPTER I.

THE DARK MIRROR.

§ 1. In the course of our inquiry into the moral of landscape (Vol. III., chap. 17), we promised, at the close of our work, to seek for some better, or at least clearer, conclusions than were then possible to us. We confined ourselves in that chapter to the vindication of the probable utility of the *love* of natural scenery. We made no assertion of the usefulness of *painting* such scenery. It might be well to delight in the real country, or admire the real flowers and true mountains. But it did not follow that it was advisable to paint them.

Far from it. Many reasons might be given why we should not paint them. All the purposes of good which we saw that the beauty of nature could accomplish, may be better fulfilled by the meanest of her realities than by the brightest of imitations. For prolonged entertainment, no picture can be compared with the wealth of interest which may be found in the herbage of the poorest field, or blossoms of the narrowest copse. As suggestive of supernatural power, the passing away of a fit-

ful rain-cloud, or opening of dawn, are in their change and mystery more pregnant than any pictures. A child would, I suppose, receive a religious lesson from a flower more willingly than from a print of one, and might be taught to understand the nineteenth Psalm, on a starry night, better than by diagrams of the constellations.

Whence it might seem a waste of time to draw landscape at all.

I believe it is;—to draw landscape mere and solitary, however beautiful (unless it be for the sake of geographical or other science, or of historical record). But there *is* a kind of landscape which it is not inexpedient to draw. What kind, we may probably discover by considering that which mankind has hitherto contented itself with painting.

§ 2. We may arrange nearly all existing landscape under the following heads:—

I. Heroic.—Representing an imaginary world, inhabited by men not perhaps perfectly civilized, but noble, and usually subjected to severe trials, and by spiritual powers of the highest order. It is frequently without architecture; never without figure-action, or emotion. Its principal master is Titian.

II. Classical.—Representing an imaginary world, inhabited by perfectly civilized men, and by spiritual powers of an inferior order.

It generally assumes this condition of things to have existed among the Greek and Roman nations. It contains usually architecture of an elevated character, and always incidents of figure-action and emotion. Its principal master is Nicolo Poussin.

III. Pastoral.—Representing peasant life and its daily work, or such scenery as may naturally be suggestive of it, consisting usually of simple landscape, in part subjected to agriculture, with figures, cattle, and domestic buildings. No supernatural being is ever visi-

bly present. It does not in ordinary cases admit architecture of an elevated character, nor exciting incident. Its principal master is Cuyp.

IV. CONTEMPLATIVE.—Directed principally to the observance of the powers of Nature, and record of the historical associations connected with landscape, illustrated by, or contrasted with, existing states of human life. No supernatural being is visibly present. It admits every variety of subject, and requires, in general, figure incident, but not of an exciting character. It was not developed completely until recent times. Its principal master is Turner.*

§ 3. These are the four true orders of landscape, not of course distinctly separated from each other in all cases, but very distinctly in typical examples. Two spurious forms require separate note.

(A.) PICTURESQUE.—This is indeed rather the degradation (or sometimes the undeveloped state) of the Contemplative, than a distinct class; but it may be considered generally as including pictures meant to display the skill of the artist, and his powers of composition; or to give agreeable forms and colors, irrespective of sentiment. It will include much modern art, with the street views and church interiors of the Dutch, and the works of Canaletto, Guardi, Tempesta, and the like.

(B.) HYBRID.—Landscape in which the painter endeavors to unite the irreconcilable sentiment of two or more of the above-named classes. Its principal masters are Berghem and Wouvermans.

* I have been embarrassed in assigning the names to these orders of art, the term "Contemplative" belonging in justice nearly as much to the romantic and pastoral conception as to the modern landscape. I intended, originally, to call the four schools—Romantic, Classic, Georgic, and Theoretic—which would have been more accurate; and more consistent with the nomenclature of the second volume; but would not have been pleasant in sound, nor to the general reader, very clear in sense.

§ 4. Passing for the present by these inferior schools, we find that all true landscape, whether simple or exalted, depends primarily for its interest on connection with humanity, or with spiritual powers. Banish your heroes and nymphs from the classical landscape—its laurel shades will move you no more. Show that the dark clefts of the most romantic mountain are uninhabited and untraversed; it will cease to be romantic. Fields without shepherds and without fairies will have no gayety in their green, nor will the noblest masses of ground or colors of cloud arrest or raise your thoughts, if the earth has no life to sustain, and the heaven none to refresh.

§ 5. It might perhaps be thought that, since from scenes in which the figure was principal, and landscape symbolical and subordinate (as in the art of Egypt), the process of ages had led us to scenes in which landscape was principal and the figure subordinate,—a continuance in the same current of feeling might bring forth at last an art from which humanity and its interests should wholly vanish, leaving us to the passionless admiration of herbage and stone. But this will not, and cannot be. For observe the parallel instance in the gradually increasing importance of dress. From the simplicity of Greek design, concentrating, I suppose, its skill chiefly on the naked form, the course of time developed conditions of Venetian imagination which found nearly as much interest, and expressed nearly as much dignity, in folds of dress and fancies of decoration as in the faces of the figures themselves; so that if from Veronese's Marriage in Cana we remove the architecture and the gay dresses, we shall not in the faces and hands remaining, find a satisfactory abstract of the picture. But try it the other way. Take out the faces; leave the draperies, and how then? Put the fine dresses and jewelled girdles into the best group you can;

paint them with all Veronese's skill: will they satisfy you?

§ 6. Not so. As long as they are in their due service and subjection—while their folds are formed by the motion of men, and their lustre adorns the nobleness of men—so long the lustre and the folds are lovely. But cast them from the human limbs;—golden circlet and silken tissue are withered; the dead leaves of autumn are more precious than they.

This is just as true, but in a far deeper sense, of the weaving of the natural robe of man's soul. Fragrant tissue of flowers, golden circlets of clouds, are only fair when they meet the fondness of human thoughts, and glorify human visions of heaven.

§ 7. It is the leaning on this truth which, more than any other, has been the distinctive character of all my own past work. And in closing a series of Art-studies, prolonged during so many years, it may be perhaps permitted me to point out this specialty—the rather that it has been, of all their characters, the one most denied. I constantly see that the same thing takes place in the estimation formed by the modern public of the work of almost any true person, living or dead. It is not needful to state here the causes of such error: but the fact is indeed so, that precisely the distinctive root and leading force of any true man's work and way are the things denied concerning him.

And in these books of mine, their distinctive character, as essays on art, is their bringing everything to a root in human passion or human hope. Arising first not in any desire to explain the principles of art, but in the endeavor to defend an individual painter from injustice, they have been colored throughout,—nay, continually altered in shape, and even warped and broken, by digressions respecting social questions, which had for me an interest tenfold greater than the work I had been forced

into undertaking. Every principle of painting which I have stated is traced to some vital or spiritual fact; and in my works on architecture the preference accorded finally to one school over another, is founded on a comparison of their influences on the life of the workman—a question by all other writers on the subject of architecture wholly forgotten or despised.

§ 8. The essential connection of the power of landscape with human emotion is not less certain, because in many impressive pictures the link is slight or local. That the connection should exist at a single point is all that we need. The comparison with the dress of the body may be carried out into the extremest parallelism. It may often happen that no part of the figure wearing the dress is discernible, nevertheless, the perceivable fact that the drapery is worn by a figure makes all the difference. In one of the most sublime figures in the word this is actually so: one of the fainting Marys in Tintoret's Crucifixion has cast her mantle over her head, and her face is lost in its shade, and her whole figure veiled in folds of gray. But what the difference is between that gray woof, that gathers round her as she falls, and the same folds cast in a heap upon the ground, that difference, and more, exists between the power of Nature through which humanity is seen, and her power in the desert. Desert—whether of leaf or sand—true desertness is not in the want of leaves, but of life. Where humanity is not, and was not, the best natural beauty is more than vain. It is even terrible; not as the dress cast aside from the body; but as an embroidered shroud hiding a skeleton.

§ 9. And on each side of a right feeling in this matter there lie, as usual, two opposite errors.

The first, that of caring for man only; and for the rest of the universe, little, or not at all, which, in a measure, was the error of the Greeks and Florentines;

the other, that of caring for the universe only;—for man, not at all,—which, in a measure, is the error of modern science, and of the Art connecting itself with such science.

The degree of power which any man may ultimately possess in landscape-painting will depend finally on his perception of this influence. If he has to paint the desert, its awfulness—if the garden, its gladsomeness—will arise simply and only from his sensibility to the story of life. Without this he is nothing but a scientific mechanist; this, though it cannot make him yet a painter, raises him to the sphere in which he may become one. Nay, the mere shadow and semblance of this have given dangerous power to works in all other respects unnoticeable; and the least degree of its true presence has given value to work in all other respects vain.

The true presence, observe, of sympathy with the spirit of man. Where this is not, sympathy with any higher spirit is impossible.

For the directest manifestation of Deity to man is in His own image, that is, in man.

§ 10. "In his own image. After his likeness." *Ad imaginem et similitudinem Suam.* I do not know what people in general understand by those words. I suppose they ought to be understood. The truth they contain seems to lie at the foundation of our knowledge both of God and man; yet do we not usually pass the sentence by, in dull reverence, attaching no definite sense to it at all? For all practical purpose, might it not as well be out of the text?

I have no time, nor much desire, to examine the vague expressions of belief with which the verse has been encumbered. Let us try to find its only possible plain significance.

§ 11. It cannot be supposed that the bodily shape of

man resembles, or resembled, any bodily shape in Deity. The likeness must therefore be, or have been, in the soul. Had it wholly passed away, and the Divine soul been altered into a soul brutal or diabolic, I suppose we should have been told of the change. But we are told nothing of the kind. The verse still stands as if for our use and trust. It was only death which was to be our punishment. Not *change*. So far as we live, the image is still there; defiled, if you will; broken, if you will; all but effaced, if you will, by death and the shadow of it. But not changed. We are not made now in any other image than God's. There are, indeed, the two states of this image—the earthly and heavenly, but both Adamite, both human, both the same likeness; only one defiled, and one pure. So that the soul of man is still a mirror, wherein may be seen, darkly, the image of the mind of God.

These may seem daring words. I am sorry that they do; but I am helpless to soften them. Discover any other meaning of the text if you are able;—but be sure that it *is* a meaning—a meaning in your head and heart—not a subtle gloss, nor a shifting of one verbal expression into another, both idealess. I repeat, that, to me, the verse has, and can have, no other signification than this—that the soul of man is a mirror of the mind of God. A mirror dark, distorted, broken, use what blameful words you please of its state; yet in the main, a true mirror, out of which alone, and by which alone, we can know anything of God at all.

"How?" the reader, perhaps, answers indignantly. "I know the nature of God by revelation, not by looking into myself."

Revelation to what? To a nature incapable of receiving truth? That cannot be; for only to a nature capable of truth, desirous of it, distinguishing it, feeding upon it, revelation is possible. To a being undesirous

of it, and hating it, revelation is impossible. There can be none to a brute, or fiend. In so far, therefore, as you love truth, and live therein, in so far revelation can exist for you;—and in so far, your mind is the image of God's.

§ 12. But consider farther, not only *to* what, but *by* what, is the revelation. By sight? or word? If by sight, then to eyes which see justly. Otherwise, no sight would be revelation. So far, then, as your sight is just, it is the image of God's sight.

If by words,—how do you know their meanings? Here is a short piece of precious word revelation, for instance. "God is love."

Love! yes. But what is *that?* The revelation does not tell you that, I think. Look into the mirror, and you will see. Out of your own heart you may know what love is. In no other possible way,—by no other help or sign. All the words and sounds ever uttered, all the revelations of cloud, or flame, or crystal, are utterly powerless. They cannot tell you, in the smallest point, what love means. Only the broken mirror can.

§ 13. Here is more revelation. "God is just!" Just! What is that? The revelation cannot help you to discover. You say it is dealing equitably or equally. But how do you discern the equality? Not by inequality of mind; not by a mind incapable of weighing, judging, or distributing. If the lengths seem unequal in the broken mirror, for you they are unequal; but if they seem equal, then the mirror is true. So far as you recognize equality, and your conscience tells you what is just, so far your mind is the image of God's: and so far as you do *not* discern this nature of justice or equality, the words "God is just" bring no revelation to you.

§ 14. "But His thoughts are not as our thoughts." No: the sea is not as the standing pool by the wayside. Yet when the breeze crisps the pool, you may see the image of the breakers, and a likeness of the foam. Nay,

in some sort, the same foam. If the sea is forever invisible to you, something you may learn of it from the pool. Nothing, assuredly, any otherwise.

"But this poor miserable Me! Is *this*, then, all the book I have got to read about God in?" Yes, truly so. No other book, no fragment of book, than that, will you ever find;—no velvet-bound missal, nor frankincensed manuscript;—nothing hieroglyphic nor cuneiform; papyrus and pyramid are alike silent on this matter; nothing in the clouds above, nor in the earth beneath. That flesh-bound volume is the only revelation that is, that was, or that can be. In that is the image of God painted; in that is the law of God written; in that is the promise of God revealed. Know thyself; for through thyself only thou canst know God.

§ 15. Through the glass, darkly. But, except through the glass, in nowise.

A tremulous crystal, waved as water, poured out upon the ground;—you may defile it, despise it, pollute it at your pleasure, and at your peril; for on the peace of those weak waves must all the heaven you shall ever gain be first seen; and through such purity as you can win for those dark waves, must all the light of the risen Sun of righteousness be bent down, by faint refraction. Cleanse them, and calm them, as you love your life.

Therefore it is that all the power of nature depends on subjection to the human soul. Man is the sun of the world; more than the real sun. The fire of his wonderful heart is the only light and heat worth gauge or measure. Where he is, are the tropics; where he is not, the ice-world.

CHAPTER II.

THE LANCE OF PALLAS.

§ 1. It might be thought that the tenor of the preceding chapter was in some sort adverse to my repeated statement that all great art is the expression of man's delight in God's work, not in *his own*. But observe, he is not himself his own work: he is himself precisely the most wonderful piece of God's workmanship extant. In this best piece not only he is bound to take delight, but cannot, in a right state of thought, take delight in anything else, otherwise than through himself. Through himself, however, as the sun of creation, not as *the* creation. In himself, as the light of the world.* Not as being the world. Let him stand in his due relation to other creatures, and to inanimate things—know them all and love them, as made for him, and he for them;—and he becomes himself the greatest and holiest of them. But let him cast off this relation, despise and forget the less creation around him, and instead of being the light of the world, he is as a sun in space—a fiery ball, spotted with storm.

§ 2. All the diseases of mind leading to fatalest ruin consist primarily in this isolation. They are the concentration of man upon himself, whether his heavenly interests or his worldly interests, matters not; it is the being *his own* interests which makes the regard of them so mortal. Every form of asceticism on one side, of

* Matt. v. 14.

sensualism on the other, is an isolation of his soul or of his body; the fixing his thoughts upon them alone: while every healthy state of nations and of individual minds consists in the unselfish presence of the human spirit everywhere, energizing over all things; speaking and living through all things.

§ 3. Man being thus the crowning and ruling work of God, it will follow that all his best art must have something to tell about himself, as the soul of things, and ruler of creatures. It must also make this reference to himself under a true conception of his own nature. Therefore all art which involves no reference to man is inferior or nugatory. And all art which involves misconception of man, or base thought of him, is in that degree false, and base.

Now the basest thought possible concerning him is, that he has no spiritual nature; and the foolishest misunderstanding of him possible is, that he has or should have, no animal nature. For his nature is nobly animal, nobly spiritual—coherently and irrevocably so; neither part of it may, but at its peril, expel, despise, or defy the other. All great art confesses and worships both.

§ 4. The art which, since the writings of Rio and Lord Lindsay, is specially known as "Christian," erred by pride in its denial of the animal nature of man;—and, in connection with all monkish and fanatical forms of religion, by looking always to another world instead of this. It wasted its strength in visions, and was therefore swept away, notwithstanding all its good and glory, by the strong truth of the naturalist art of the sixteenth century. But that naturalist art erred on the other side; denied at last the spiritual nature of man, and perished in corruption.

A contemplative reaction is taking place in modern times, out of which it may be hoped a new spiritual

art may be developed. The first school of landscape, named, in the foregoing chapter, the Heroic, is that of the noble naturalists. The second (Classical), and third (Pastoral), belong to the time of sensual decline. The fourth (Contemplative) is that of modern revival.

§ 5. But why, the reader will ask, is no place given in this scheme to the "Christian" or spiritual art which preceded the naturalists? Because all landscape belonging to that art is subordinate, and in one essential principle false. It is subordinate, because intended only to exalt the conception of saintly or Divine presence:—rather therefore to be considered as a landscape decoration or type, than an effort to paint nature. If I included it in my list of schools, I should have to go still farther back, and include with it the conventional and illustrative landscape of the Greeks and Egyptians.

§ 6. But also it cannot constitute a real school, because its first assumption is false, namely, that the natural world can be represented without the element of death.

The real schools of landscape are primarily distinguished from the preceding unreal ones by their introduction of this element. They are not at first in any sort the worthier for it. But they are more true, and capable, therefore, in the issue, of becoming worthier.

It will be a hard piece of work for us to think this rightly out, but it must be done.

§ 7. Perhaps an accurate analysis of the schools of art of all time might show us that when the immortality of the soul was practically and completely believed, the elements of decay, danger, and grief in visible things were always disregarded. However this may be, it is assuredly so in the early Christian schools. The ideas of danger or decay seem not merely repugnant, but inconceivable to them; the expression of immortality and perpetuity is alone possible. I do not mean that they

take no note of the absolute fact of corruption. This fact the early painters often compel themselves to look fuller in the front than any other men: as in the way they usually paint the Deluge (the raven feeding on the bodies), and in all the various triumphs and processions of the Power of Death, which formed one great chapter of religious teaching and painting, from Orcagna's time to the close of the Purist epoch. But I mean that this external fact of corruption is separated in their minds from the main conditions of their work; and its horror enters no more into their general treatment of landscape than the fear of murder or martyrdom, both of which they had nevertheless continually to represent. None of these things appeared to them as affecting the general dealings of the Deity with His world. Death, pain, and decay were simply momentary accidents in the course of immortality, which never ought to exercise any depressing influence over the hearts of men, or in the life of Nature. God, in intense life, peace, and helping power, was always and everywhere. Human bodies, at one time or another, had indeed to be made dust of, and raised from it; and this becoming dust was hurtful and humiliating, but not in the least melancholy, nor, in any very high degree, important; except to thoughtless persons, who needed sometimes to be reminded of it, and whom, not at all fearing the things much himself, the painter accordingly did remind of it, somewhat sharply.

§ 8. A similar condition of mind seems to have been attained, not unfrequently, in modern times, by persons whom either narrowness of circumstance or education, or vigorous moral efforts have guarded from the troubling of the world, so as to give them firm and childlike trust in the power and presence of God, together with peace of conscience, and a belief in the passing of all evil into some form of good. It is impossible that a

person thus disciplined should feel, in any of its more acute phases, the sorrow for any of the phenomena of nature, or terror in any material danger which would occur to another. The absence of personal fear, the consciousness of security as great in the midst of pestilence and storm, as amidst beds of flowers on a summer morning; and the certainty that whatever appeared evil, or was assuredly painful, must eventually issue in a far greater and enduring good—this general feeling and conviction, I say, would gradually lull, and at last put to entire rest, the physical sensations of grief and fear; so that the man would look upon danger without dread, —accept pain without lamentation.

§ 9. It may perhaps be thought that this is a very high and right state of mind.

Unfortunately, it appears that the attainment of it is never possible without inducing some form of intellectual weakness.

No painter belonging to the purest religious schools ever mastered his art. Perugino nearly did so; but it was because he was more rational—more a man of the world—than the rest. No literature exists of a high class produced by minds in the pure religious temper. On the contrary, a great deal of literature exists, produced by persons in that temper, which is markedly, and very far, below average literary work.

§ 10. The reason of this I believe to be, that the right faith of man is not intended to give him repose, but to enable him to do his work. It is not intended that he should look away from the place he lives in now, and cheer himself with thoughts of the place he is to live in next, but that he should look stoutly into this world, in faith that if he does his work thoroughly here, some good to others or himself, with which, however, he is not at present concerned, will come of it hereafter. And this kind of brave, but not very hopeful or cheerful faith,

I perceive to be always rewarded by clear practical success and splendid intellectual power; while the faith which dwells on the future fades away into rosy mist, and emptiness of musical air. That result indeed follows naturally enough on its habit of assuming that things must be right, or must come right, when, probably, the fact is, that so far as we are concerned, they are entirely wrong; and going wrong: and also on its weak and false way of looking on what these religious persons call "the bright side of things," that is to say, on one side of them only, when God has given them two sides, and intended us to see both.

§ 11. I was reading but the other day, in a book by a zealous, useful, and able Scotch clergyman, one of these rhapsodies, in which he described a scene in the Highlands to show (he said) the goodness of God. In this Highland scene there was nothing but sunshine, and fresh breezes, and bleating lambs, and clean tartans, and all manner of pleasantness. Now a Highland scene is, beyond dispute, pleasant enough in its own way; but, looked close at, has its shadows. Here, for instance, is the very fact of one, as pretty as I can remember—having seen many. It is a little valley of soft turf, enclosed in its narrow oval by jutting rocks and broad flakes of nodding fern. From one side of it to the other winds, serpentine, a clear brown stream, drooping into quicker ripple as it reaches the end of the oval field, and then, first islanding a purple and white rock with an amber pool, it dashes away into a narrow fall of foam under a thicket of mountain ash and alder. The autumn sun, low but clear, shines on the scarlet ash-berries and on the golden birch-leaves, which, fallen here and there, when the breeze has not caught them, rest quiet in the crannies of the purple rock. Beside the rock, in the hollow under the thicket, the carcass of a ewe, drowned in the last flood, lies nearly bare to the bone, its white

ribs protruding through the skin, raven-torn; and the rags of its wool still flickering from the branches that first stayed it as the stream swept it down. A little lower, the current plunges, roaring, into a circular chasm like a well, surrounded on three sides by a chimney-like hollowness of polished rock, down which the foam slips in detached snow-flakes. Round the edges of the pool beneath, the water circles slowly, like black oil; a little butterfly lies on its back, its wings glued to one of the eddies, its limbs feebly quivering; a fish rises and it is gone. Lower down the stream, I can just see, over a knoll, the green and damp turf roofs of four or five hovels, built at the edge of a morass, which is trodden by the cattle into a black Slough of Despond at their doors, and traversed by a few ill-set stepping-stones, with here and there a flat slab on the tops, where they have sunk out of sight; and at the turn of the brook I see a man fishing, with a boy and a dog—a picturesque and pretty group enough certainly, if they had not been there all day starving. I know them, and I know the dog's ribs also, which are nearly as bare as the dead ewe's; and the child's wasted shoulders, cutting his old tartan jacket through, so sharp are they. We will go down and talk with the man.

§ 12. Or, that I may not piece pure truth with fancy, for I have none of his words set down, let us hear a word or two from another such, a Scotchman also, and as true-hearted, and in just as fair a scene. I write out the passage, in which I have kept his few sentences, word for word, as it stands in my private diary:—"22d April (1851). Yesterday I had a long walk up the Via Gellia, at Matlock, coming down upon it from the hills above, all sown with anemones and violets, and murmuring with sweet springs. Above all the mills in the valley, the brook, in its first purity, forms a small shallow pool, with a sandy bottom covered with cresses, and other

water-plants. A man was wading in it for cresses as I passed up the valley, and bade me good-day. I did not go much farther; he was there when I returned. I passed him again, about one hundred yards, when it struck me I might as well learn all I could about watercresses: so I turned back. I asked the man, among other questions, what he called the common weed, something like watercress, but with a serrated leaf, which grows at the edge of nearly all such pools. 'We calls that brooklime, hereabouts,' said a voice behind me. I turned, and saw three men, miners or manufacturers—two evidently Derbyshire men, and respectable-looking in their way; the third, thin, poor, old, and harder-featured, and utterly in rags. 'Brooklime?' I said. 'What do you call it lime for?' The man said he did not know, it was called that. 'You'll find that in the British 'Erba,' said the weak, calm voice of the old man. I turned to him in much surprise; but he went on saying something dryly (I hardly understood what) to the cress-gatherer; who contradicting him, the old man said he 'didn't know fresh water,' he 'knew enough of sa't.' 'Have you been a sailor?' I asked. 'I was a sailor for eleven years and ten months of my life,' he said, in the same strangely quiet manner. 'And what are you now?' 'I lived for ten years after my wife's death by picking up rags and bones; I hadn't much occasion afore.' 'And now how do you live?' 'Why, I lives hard and honest, and haven't got to live long,' or something to that effect. He then went on, in a kind of maundering way, about his wife. 'She had rheumatism and fever very bad; and her second rib grow'd over her hench-bone. A' was a clever woman, but a' grow'd to be a very little one' (this with an expression of deep melancholy). 'Eighteen years after her first lad she was in the family way again, and they had doctors up from Lunnon about it. They wanted to rip her open

and take the child out of her side. But I never would give my consent.' (Then, after a pause:) 'She died twenty-six hours and ten minutes after it. I never cared much what come of me since; but I know that I shall soon reach her; that's a knowledge I would na gie for the king's crown.' 'You are a Scotchman, are not you?' I asked. 'I'm from the Isle of Skye, sir; I'm a McGregor.' I said something about his religious faith. 'Ye'll know I was bred in the Church of Scotland, sir,' he said, 'and I love it as I love my own soul; but I think the Wesleyan Methodists ha' got salvation among them, too.'"

Truly, this Highland and English hill-scenery is fair enough; but has its shadows; and deeper coloring, here and there, than that of heath and rose.

§ 13. Now, as far as I have watched the main powers of human mind, they have risen first from the resolution to see fearlessly, pitifully, and to its very worst, what these deep colors mean, wheresoever they fall; not by any means to pass on the other side looking pleasantly up to the sky, but to stoop to the horror, and let the sky, for the present, take care of its own clouds. However this may be in moral matters, with which I have nothing here to do, in my own field of inquiry the fact is so; and all great and beautiful work has come of first gazing without shrinking into the darkness. If, having done so, the human spirit can, by its courage and faith, conquer the evil, it rises into conceptions of victorious and consummated beauty. It is then the spirit of the highest Greek and Venetian Art. If unable to conquer the evil, but remaining in strong, though melancholy war with it, not rising into supreme beauty, it is the spirit of the best northern art, typically represented by that of Holbein and Durer. If, itself conquered by the evil, infected by the dragon breath of it, and at last brought into captivity, so as to take delight in evil forever, it be-

comes the spirit of the dark, but still powerful sensualistic art, represented typically by that of Salvator. We must trace this fact briefly through Greek, Venetian, and Dureresque art; we shall then see how the art of decline came of avoiding the evil, and seeking pleasure only; and thus obtain, at last, some power of judging whether the tendency of our own contemplative art be right or ignoble.

§ 14. The ruling purpose of Greek poetry is the assertion of victory, by heroism, over fate, sin, and death. The terror of these great enemies is dwelt upon chiefly by the tragedians. The victory over them by Homer.

The adversary chiefly contemplated by the tragedians is Fate, or predestinate misfortune. And that under three principal forms.

A. Blindness, or ignorance; not in itself guilty, but inducing acts which otherwise would have been guilty; and leading, no less than guilt, to destruction.*

B. Visitation upon one person of the sin of another.

C. Repression, by brutal or tyrannous strength, of a benevolent will.

§ 15. In all these cases sorrow is much more definitely connected with sin by the Greek tragedians than by Shakspeare. The "fate" of Shakspeare is, indeed, a form of blindness, but it issues in little more than haste or indiscretion. It is in the literal sense, "fatal," but hardly criminal.

* The speech of Achilles to Priam expresses this idea of fatality and submission clearly, there being two vessels—one full of sorrow, the other of great and noble gifts (a sense of disgrace mixing with that of sorrow, and of honor with that of joy), from which Jupiter pours forth the destinies of men; the idea partly corresponding to the scriptural—"In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full mixed, and He poureth out of the same." But the title of the gods, nevertheless, both with Homer and Hesiod, is given not from the cup of sorrow, but of good; "givers of good" (δωτῆρες ἐάων).—*Hes. Theog.* 664: *Odyss.* viii. 325.

The "I am fortune's fool" of Romeo, expresses Shakspeare's primary idea of tragic circumstance. Often his victims are entirely innocent, swept away by mere current of strong encompassing calamity (Ophelia, Cordelia, Arthur, Queen Katharine). This is rarely so with the Greeks. The victim may indeed be innocent, as Antigone, but is in some way resolutely entangled with crime, and destroyed by it, as if it struck by pollution, no less than participation.

The victory over sin and death is therefore also with the Greek tragedians more complete than with Shakspeare. As the enemy has more direct moral personality —as it is sinfulness more than mischance, it is met by a higher moral resolve, a greater preparation of heart, a more solemn patience and purposed self-sacrifice. At the close of a Shakspeare tragedy nothing remains but dead march and clothes of burial. At the close of a Greek tragedy there are far-off sounds of a divine triumph, and a glory as of resurrection.*

§ 16. The Homeric temper is wholly different. Far more tender, more practical, more cheerful; bent chiefly on present things and giving victory now, and here, rather than in hope, and hereafter. The enemies of mankind, in Homer's conception, are more distinctly conquerable; they are ungoverned passions, especially anger, and unreasonable impulse generally (ἀτη). Hence the anger of Achilles, misdirected by pride, but rightly directed by friendship, is the subject of the *Iliad*. The anger of Ulysses (Ὀδυσσεὺς "the angry"), misdirected at first into idle and irregular hostilities, directed at last to execution of sternest justice, is the subject of the *Odyssey*.

Though this is the central idea of the two poems, it is connected with general display of the evil of all un-

* The Alcestis is perhaps the central example of the *idea* of all Greek drama.

bridled passions, pride, sensuality, indolence, or curiosity. The pride of Atrides, the passion of Paris, the sluggishness of Elpenor, the curiosity of Ulysses himself about the Cyclops, the impatience of his sailors in untying the winds, and all other faults or follies, down to that—(evidently no small one in Homer's mind)—of domestic disorderliness, are throughout shown in contrast with conditions of patient affection and household peace.

Also, the wild powers and mysteries of Nature are in the Homeric mind among the enemies of man; so that all the labors of Ulysses are an expression of the contest of manhood, not only with its own passions or with the folly of others, but with the merciless and mysterious powers of the natural world.

§ 17. This is perhaps the chief signification of the seven years' stay with Calypso, "the concealer." Not, as vulgarly thought, the concealer of Ulysses, but the great concealer—the hidden power of natural things. She is the daughter of Atlas and the Sea (Atlas, the sustainer of heaven, and the Sea, the disturber of the Earth). She dwells in the island of Ogygia ("the ancient or venerable"). (Whenever Athens, or any other Greek city, is spoken of with any peculiar reverence, it is called "Ogygian.") Escaping from this goddess of secrets, and from other spirits, some of destructive natural force (Scylla), others signifying the enchantment of mere natural beauty (Circe, daughter of the Sun and Sea), he arrives at last at the Phæacian land, whose king is "strength with intellect," and whose queen, "virtue." These restore him to his country.

§ 18. Now observe that in their dealing with all these subjects the Greeks never shrink from horror; down to its uttermost depth, to its most appalling physical detail, they strive to sound the secrets of sorrow. For them there is no passing by on the other side, no turn-

ing away the eyes to vanity from pain. Literally, they have not "lifted up their souls unto vanity." Whether there be consolation for them or not, neither apathy nor blindness shall be their saviors; if, for them, thus knowing the facts of the grief of earth, any hope, relief, or triumph may hereafter seem possible,—well; but if not, still hopeless, reliefless, eternal, the sorrow shall be met face to face. This Hector, so righteous, so merciful, so brave, has, nevertheless, to look upon his dearest brother in miserablest death. His own soul passes away in hopeless sobs through the throat-wound of the Grecian spear. That is one aspect of things in this world, a fair world truly, but having, among its other aspects, this one, highly ambiguous.

§ 19. Meeting it boldly as they may, gazing right into the skeleton face of it, the ambiguity remains; nay, in some sort gains upon them. We trusted in the gods; —we thought that wisdom and courage would save us. Our wisdom and courage themselves deceive us to our death. Athena had the aspect of Deiphobus—terror of the enemy. She has not terrified him, but left us, in our mortal need.

And, beyond that mortality, what hope have we? Nothing is clear to us on that horizon, nor comforting. Funeral honors; perhaps also rest; perhaps a shadowy life—artless, joyless, loveless. No devices in that darkness of the grave, nor daring, nor delight. Neither marrying nor giving in marriage, nor casting of spears, nor rolling of chariots, nor voice of fame. Lapped in pale Elysian mist, chilling the forgetful heart and feeble frame, shall we waste on forever? Can the dust of earth claim more of immortality than this? Or shall we have even so much as rest? May we, indeed, lie down again in the dust, or have our sins not hidden from us even the things that belong to that peace? May not chance and the whirl of passion govern us there; when there

shall be no thought, nor work, nor wisdom, nor breathing of the soul?*

Be it so. With no better reward, no brighter hope, we will be men while we may: men, just, and strong, and fearless, and up to our power, perfect. Athena herself, our wisdom and our strength, may betray us;—Phœbus, our sun, smite us with plague, or hide his face from us helpless;—Jove and all the powers of fate oppress us, or give us up to destruction. While we live, we will hold fast our integrity; no weak tears shall blind us, no untimely tremors abate our strength of arm nor swiftness of limb. The gods have given us at least this glorious body and this righteous conscience; these will we keep bright and pure to the end. So may we fall to misery, but not to baseness; so may we sink to sleep, but not to shame.

§ 20. And herein was conquest. So defied, the betraying and accusing shadows shrank back; the mysterious horror subdued itself to majestic sorrow. Death was swallowed up in victory. Their blood, which seemed to be poured out upon the ground, rose into hyacinthine flowers. All the beauty of earth opened to them; they had ploughed into its darkness, and they reaped its gold; the gods, in whom they had trusted through all semblance of oppression, came down to love them and be their helpmates. All nature round them became divine,—one harmony of power and peace. The sun hurt them not by day, nor the moon by night; the earth opened no more her jaws into the pit; the sea whitened no more against them the teeth of his devouring waves. Sun, and moon, and earth, and sea,—all melted into grace and love; the fatal arrows rang not now at the shoulders of Apollo the healer; lord of life and of the

* τῷ καὶ τεθνειῶτι νόον πόρε Περσεφόνεια,
οἷῳ πεπνύσθαι· τοὶ δὲ σκιαὶ ἀΐσσουσιν.
Od. x. 495.

three great spirits of life—Care, Memory, and Melody. Great Artemis guarded their flocks by night; Selene kissed in love the eyes of those who slept. And from all came the help of heaven to body and soul; a strange spirit lifting the lovely limbs; a strange light glowing on the golden hair; and strangest comfort filling the trustful heart, so that they could put off their armor, and lie down to sleep,—their work well done, whether at the gates of their temples * or of their mountains; † accepting the death they once thought terrible, as the gift of Him who knew and granted what was best

* οὐκέτι ἀνέστησαν, αλλ' ἐν τέλει τουτῳ ἔσχοντο. Herod. i. 31.

† ὁ δὲ ἀποπεμπόμενος, αὐτὸς μὲν οὐκ ἀπελίπετο· τὸν δὲ παῖδα συστρατευόμενον, ἐόντα οἱ μουνογενέα, ἀπέπεμψε. Herod. vii. 221.

CHAPTER III.

THE WINGS OF THE LION.

§ 1. Such being the heroic spirit of Greek religion and art, we may now with ease trace the relations between it and that which animated the Italian, and chiefly the Venetian, schools.

Observe, all the nobleness, as well as the faults, of the Greek art were dependent on its making the most of this present life. It might do so in the Anacreontic temper—Τί Πλειάδεσσι κἀμοί; "What have I to do with the Pleiads?" or in the defiant or the trustful endurance of fate;—but its dominion was in this world.

Florentine art was essentially Christian, ascetic, expectant of a better world, and antagonistic, therefore, to the Greek temper. So that the Greek element, once forced upon it, destroyed it. There was absolute incompatibility between them. Florentine art, also, could not produce landscape. It despised the rock, the tree, the vital air itself, aspiring to breathe empyreal air.

Venetian art began with the same aim and under the same restrictions. Both are healthy in the youth of art. Heavenly aim and severe law for boyhood; earthly work and fair freedom for manhood.

§ 2. The Venetians began, I repeat, with asceticism; always, however, delighting in more massive and deep color than other religious painters. They are especially fond of saints who have been cardinals, because of their red hats, and they sunburn all their hermits into splendid russet brown.

They differed from the Pisans in having no Maremma between them and the sea; from the Romans, in continually quarelling with the Pope; and from the Florentines in having no gardens.

They had another kind of garden, deep-furrowed, with blossom in white wreaths—fruitless. Perpetual May therein, and singing of wild, nestless birds. And they had no Maremma to separate them from this garden of theirs. The destiny of Pisa was changed, in all probability, by the ten miles of marshland and poisonous air between it and the beach. The Genoese energy was feverish; too much heat reflected from their torrid Apennine. But the Venetian had his free horizon, his salt breeze, and sandy Lido-shore; sloped far and flat,—ridged sometimes under the Tramontane winds with half a mile's breadth of rollers;—sea and sand shrivelled up together in one yellow careering field of fall and roar.

§ 3. They were, also, we said, always quarrelling with the Pope. Their religious liberty came, like their bodily health, from that wave-training; for it is one notable effect of a life passed on shipboard to destroy weak beliefs in appointed forms of religion. A sailor may be grossly superstitious, but his superstitions will be connected with amulets and omens, not cast in systems. He must accustom himself, if he prays at all, to pray anywhere and anyhow. Candlesticks and incense not being portable into the maintop, he perceives those decorations to be, on the whole, inessential to a maintop mass. Sails must be set and cables bent, be it never so strict a saint's day, and it is found that no harm comes of it. Absolution on a lee-shore must be had of the breakers, it appears, if at all, and they give it plenary and brief, without listening to confession.

Whereupon our religious opinions become vague, but our religious confidences strong; and the end of it all is that we perceive the Pope to be on the other side of the

Apennines, and able, indeed, to sell indulgences, but not winds, for any money. Whereas, God and the sea are with us, and we must even trust them both, and take what they shall send.

§ 4. Then, farther. This ocean-work is wholly adverse to any morbid conditions of sentiment. Reverie, above all things, is forbidden by Scylla and Charybdis. By the dogs and the depths, no dreaming! The first thing required of us is presence of mind. Neither love, nor poetry, nor piety, must ever so take up our thoughts as to make us slow or unready. In sweet Val d'Arno it is permissible enough to dream among the orange-blossoms, and forget the day in twilight of ilex. But along the avenues of the Adrian waves there can be no careless walking. Vigilance, night and day, required of us, besides learning of many practical lessons in severe and humble dexterities. It is enough for the Florentine to know how to use his sword and to ride. We Venetians, also, must be able to use our swords, and on ground which is none of the steadiest; but, besides, we must be able to do nearly everything that hands can turn to—rudders, and yards, and cables, all needing workmanly handling and workmanly knowledge, from captain as well as from men. To drive a nail, lash a spar, reef a sail—rude work this for noble hands; but to be done sometimes, and done well, on pain of death. All which not only takes mean pride out of us, and puts nobler pride of power in its stead; but it tends partly to soothe, partly to chasten, partly to employ and direct, the hot Italian temper, and make us every way greater, calmer, and happier.

§ 5. Moreover, it tends to induce in us great respect for the whole human body; for its limbs, as much as for its tongue or its wit. Policy and eloquence are well; and, indeed, we Venetians can be politic enough, and can speak melodiously when we choose; but to put the

helm up at the right moment is the beginning of all cunning — and for that we need arm and eye; — not tongue. And with this respect for the body as such, comes also the sailor's preference of massive beauty in bodily form. The landsmen, among their roses and orange-blossoms, and checkered shadows of twisted vine, may well please themselves with pale faces, and finely drawn eyebrows, and fantastic braiding of hair. But from the sweeping glory of the sea we learn to love another kind of beauty; broad-breasted; level-browed, like the horizon;—thighed and shouldered like the billows;—footed like their stealing foam;—bathed in cloud of golden hair, like their sunsets.

§ 6. Such were the physical influences constantly in operation on the Venetians; their painters, however, were partly prepared for their work by others in their infancy. Associations connected with early life among mountains softened and deepened the teaching of the sea; and the wildness of form of the Tyrolese Alps gave greater strength and grotesqueness to their imaginations than the Greek painters could have found among the cliffs of the Ægean. Thus far, however, the influences on both are nearly similar. The Greek sea was indeed less bleak, and the Greek hills less grand; but the difference was in degree rather than in the nature of their power. The moral influences at work on the two races were far more sharply opposed.

§ 7. Evil, as we saw, had been fronted by the Greek, and thrust out of his path. Once conquered, if he thought of it more, it was involuntarily, as we remember a painful dream, yet with a secret dread that the dream might return and continue for ever. But the teaching of the church in the middle ages had made the contemplation of evil one of the duties of men. As sin, it was to be duly thought upon, that it might be confessed. As suffering, endured joyfully, in hope of future

reward. Hence conditions of bodily distemper which an Athenian would have looked upon with the severest contempt and aversion, were in the Christian church regarded always with pity, and often with respect; while the partial practice of celibacy by the clergy, and by those over whom they had influence, — together with the whole system of conventual penance and pathetic ritual (with the vicious reactionary tendencies necessarily following), introduced calamitous conditions both of body and soul, which added largely to the pagan's simple list of elements of evil, and introduced the most complicated states of mental suffering and decrepitude.

§ 8. Therefore the Christian painters differed from the Greek in two main points. They had been taught a faith which put an end to restless questioning and discouragement. All was at last to be well—and their best genius might be peacefully given to imagining the glories of heaven and the happiness of its redeemed. But on the other hand, though suffering was to cease in heaven, it was to be not only endured, but honored upon earth. And from the Crucifixion, down to a beggar's lameness, all the tortures and maladies of men were to be made, at least in part, the subjects of art. The Venetian was, therefore, in his inner mind, less serious than the Greek: in his superficial temper, sadder. In his heart there was none of the deep horror which vexed the soul of Æschylus or Homer. His Pallas-shield was the shield of Faith, not the shield of the Gorgon. All was at last to issue happily; in sweetest harpings and seven-fold circles of light. But for the present he had to dwell with the maimed and the blind, and to revere Lazarus more than Achilles.

§ 9. This reference to a future world has a morbid influence on all their conclusions. For the earth and all its natural elements are despised. They are to pass

away like a scroll. Man, the immortal, is alone revered; his work and presence are all that can be noble or desirable. Men, and fair architecture, temples and courts such as may be in a celestial city, or the clouds and angels of Paradise; these are what we must paint when we want beautiful things. But the sea, the mountains, the forests, are all adverse to us,—a desolation. The ground that was cursed for our sake;—the sea that executed judgment on all our race, and rages against us still, though bridled;—storm-demons churning it into foam in nightly glare on Lido, and hissing from it against our palaces. Nature is but a terror, or a temptation. She is for hermits, martyrs, murderers,—for St. Jerome, and St. Mary of Egypt, and the Magdalen in the desert, and monk Peter, falling before the sword.

§ 10. But the worst point we have to note respecting the spirit of Venetian landscape is its pride.

It was observed in the course of the third volume how the mediæval temper had rejected agricultural pursuits, and whatever pleasures could come of them.

At Venice this negation had reached its extreme. Though the Florentines and Romans had no delight in farming, they had in gardening. The Venetian possessed, and cared for, neither fields nor pastures. Being delivered, to his loss, from all the wholesome labors of tillage, he was also shut out from the sweet wonders and charities of the earth, and from the pleasant natural history of the year. Birds and beasts, and times and seasons, all unknown to him. No swallow chattered at his window,* nor, nested under his golden roofs, claimed the sacredness of his mercy;† no Pythagorean fowl taught him the blessings of the poor,‡ nor did the grave spirit of poverty rise at his side to set forth the delicate grace and honor of lowly life.§ No humble

* Anacreon, Ode 12.
† Herod. i. 59.
‡ Lucian (Micyllus).
§ Aristophanes, Plutus.

thoughts of grasshopper sire had he, like the Athenian; no gratitude for gifts of olive; no childish care for figs, any more than thistles. The rich Venetian feast had no need of the figtree spoon.* Dramas about birds, and wasps, and frogs, would have passed unheeded by his proud fancy; carol or murmur of them had fallen unrecognized on ears accustomed only to grave syllables of war-tried men, and wash of soundless wave.

§ 11. No simple joy was possible to him. Only stateliness and power; high intercourse with kingly and beautiful humanity, proud thoughts, or splendid pleasures; throned sensualities, and ennobled appetites. But of innocent, childish, helpful, holy pleasures, he had none. As in the classical landscape, nearly all rural labor is banished from the Titianesque: there is one bold etching of a landscape, with grand ploughing in the foreground, but this is only a caprice; the customary Venetian background is without sign of laborious rural life. We find indeed often a shepherd with his flock, sometimes a woman spinning, but no division of fields, no growing crops nor nestling villages. In the numerous drawings and woodcuts variously connected with or representative of Venetian work, a watermill is a frequent object, a river constant, generally the sea. But the prevailing idea in all the great pictures I have seen, is that of mountainous land with wild but graceful forest, and rolling or horizontal clouds. The mountains are dark blue; the clouds glowing or soft gray, always massive; the light, deep, clear, melancholy; the foliage, neither intricate nor graceful, but compact and sweeping (with undulated trunks), dividing much into horizontal flakes, like the clouds; the ground rocky and broken somewhat monotonously, but richly green with wild herbage; here and there a flower, by preference white or blue, rarely yellow, still more rarely red.

* Hippias Major, 208.

§ 12. It was stated that this heroic landscape of theirs was peopled by spiritual beings of the highest order. And in this rested the dominion of the Venetians over all later schools. They were the *last believing* school of Italy. Although, as I said above, always quarrelling with the Pope, there is all the more evidence of an earnest faith in their religion. People who trusted the Madonna less, flattered the Pope more. But down to Tintoret's time, the Roman Catholic religion was still real and sincere at Venice; and though faith in it was compatible with much which to us appears criminal or absurd, the religion itself was entirely sincere.

§ 13. Perhaps when you see one of Titian's splendidly passionate subjects, or find Veronese making the Marriage in Cana one blaze of worldly pomp, you imagine that Titian must have been a sensualist, and Veronese an unbeliever.

Put the idea from you at once, and be assured of this forever;—it will guide you through many a labyrinth of life, as well as of painting,—that of an evil tree, men never gather good fruit—good of any sort or kind;—even good sensualism.

Let us look to this calmly. We have seen what physical advantage the Venetian had, in his sea and sky; also what moral disadvantage he had, in scorn of the poor; now finally, let us see with what power he was invested, which men since his time have never recovered more.

§ 14. "Neither of a bramble bush, gather they grapes."

The great saying has twofold help for us. Be assured, first, that if it were bramble from which you gathered them, these are not grapes in your hand, though they look like grapes. Or if these are indeed grapes, it was no bramble you gathered them from, though it looked like one.

It is difficult for persons, accustomed to receive, without questioning, the modern English idea of religion, to understand the temper of the Venetian Catholics. I do not enter into examination of our own feelings; but I have to note this one significant point of difference between us.

§ 15. An English gentleman, desiring his portrait, gives probably to the painter a choice of several actions, in any of which he is willing to be represented. As for instance, riding his best horse, shooting with his favorite pointer, manifesting himself in his robes of state on some great public occasion, meditating in his study, playing with his children, or visiting his tenants; in any of these or other such circumstances, he will give the artist free leave to paint him. But in one important action he would shrink even from the suggestion of being drawn. He will assuredly not let himself be painted praying.

Strangely, this is the action which, of all others, a Venetian desires to be painted in. If they want a noble and complete portrait, they nearly always choose to be painted on their knees.

§ 16. "Hypocrisy," you say; and "that they might be seen of men." If we examine ourselves, or any one else, who will give trustworthy answer on this point, so as to ascertain, to the best of our judgment, what the feeling *is*, which would make a modern English person dislike to be painted praying, we shall not find it, I believe, to be excess of sincerity. Whatever we find it to be, the opposite Venetian feeling is certainly not hypocrisy. It is often conventionalism, implying as little devotion in the person represented, as regular attendance at church does with us. But that it is not hypocrisy, you may ascertain by one simple consideration (supposing you not to have enough knowledge of the expression of sincere persons to judge by the portraits themselves).

The Venetians, when they desired to deceive, were much too subtle to attempt it clumsily. If they assumed the mask of religion, the mask must have been of some use. The persons whom it deceived must, therefore, have been religious, and, being so, have believed in the Venetians' sincerity. If therefore, among other contemporary nations, with whom they had intercourse, we can find any, more religious than they, who were duped, or even influenced, by their external religiousness, we might have some ground for suspecting that religiousness to be assumed. But if we can find no one likely to have been deceived, we must believe the Venetian to have been, in reality, what there was no advantage in seeming.

§ 17. I leave the matter to your examination, forewarning you, confidently, that you will discover by severest evidence, that the Venetian religion was true. Not only true, but one of the main motives of their lives. In the field of investigation to which we are here limited, I will collect some of the evidence of this.

For one profane picture by great Venetians, you will find ten of sacred subjects; and those, also, including their grandest, most labored, and most beloved works. Tintoret's power culminates in two great religious pictures: the Crucifixion, and the Paradise. Titian's in the Assumption, the Peter Martyr, and Presentation of the Virgin. Veronese's in the Marriage in Cana. John Bellini and Basaiti never, so far as I remember, painted any other than sacred subjects. By the Palmas, Vincenzo, Catena, and Bonifazio, I remember no profane subject of importance.

§ 18. There is, moreover, one distinction of the very highest import between the treatment of sacred subjects by Venetian painters and by all others.

Throughout the rest of Italy, piety had become abstract, and opposed theoretically to worldly life; hence

the Florentine and Umbrian painters generally separated their saints from living men. They delighted in imagining scenes of spiritual perfectness;—Paradises, and companies of the redeemed at the judgment;—glorified meetings of martyrs;—madonnas surrounded by circles of angels. If, which was rare, definite portraitures of living men were introduced, these real characters formed a kind of chorus or attendant company, taking no part in the action. At Venice all this was reversed, and so boldly as at first to shock, with its seeming irreverence, a spectator accustomed to the formalities and abstractions of the so-called sacred schools. The madonnas are no more seated apart on their thrones, the saints no more breathe celestial air. They are on our own plain ground—nay, here in our houses with us. All kind of worldly business going on in their presence, fearlessly; our own friends and respected acquaintances, with all their mortal faults, and in their mortal flesh, looking at them face to face unalarmed: nay, our dearest children playing with their pet dogs at Christ's very feet.

I once myself thought this irreverent. How foolishly! As if children whom He loved *could* play anywhere else.

§ 19. The picture most illustrative of this feeling is perhaps that at Dresden, of Veronese's family, painted by himself.

He wishes to represent them as happy and honored. The best happiness and highest honor he can imagine for them is that they should be presented to the Madonna, to whom, therefore, they are being brought by the three virtues—Faith, Hope, and Charity.

The Virgin stands in a recess behind two marble shafts, such as may be seen in any house belonging to an old family in Venice. She places the boy Christ on the edge of a balustrade before her. At her side are St.

John the Baptist, and St. Jerome. This group occupies the left side of the picture. The pillars, seen sideways, divide it from the group formed by the Virtues, with the wife and children of Veronese. He himself stands a little behind, his hands clasped in prayer.

§ 20. His wife kneels full in front, a strong Venetian woman, well advanced in years. She has brought up her children in fear of God, and is not afraid to meet the Virgin's eyes. She gazes steadfastly on them; her proud head and gentle, self-possessed face are relieved in one broad mass of shadow against a space of light, formed by the white robes of Faith, who stands beside her, — guardian, and companion. Perhaps a somewhat disappointing Faith at the first sight, for her face is not in any way exalted or refined. Veronese knew that Faith had to companion simple and slow-hearted people perhaps oftener than able or refined people—does not therefore insist on her being severely intellectual, or looking as if she were always in the best company. So she is only distinguished by her pure white (not bright white) dress, her delicate hand, her golden hair drifted in light ripples across her breast, from which the white robes fall nearly in the shape of a shield—the shield of Faith. A little behind her stands Hope; she also, at first, not to most people a recognizable Hope. We usually paint Hope as young, and joyous. Veronese knows better. That young hope is vain hope—passing away in rain of tears; but the Hope of Veronese is aged, assured, remaining when all else had been taken away. "For tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope;" and *that* hope maketh not ashamed.

She has a black veil on her head.

Then again, in the front, is Charity, red-robed; stout in the arms,—a servant of all work, she; but small-headed, not being specially given to thinking · soft-

eyed, her hair braided brightly, her lips rich red, sweet-blossoming. She has got some work to do even now, for a nephew of Veronese's is doubtful about coming forward, and looks very humbly and penitently towards the Virgin—his life perhaps not having been quite so exemplary as might at present be wished. Faith reaches her small white hand lightly back to him, lays the tips of her fingers on his; but Charity takes firm hold of him by the wrist from behind, and will push him on presently, if he still hangs back.

§ 21. In front of the mother kneel her two eldest children, a girl of about sixteen, and a boy a year or two younger. They are both wrapt in adoration—the boy's being the deepest. Nearer us, at their left side, is a younger boy, about nine years old—a black-eyed fellow, full of life—and evidently his father's darling (for Veronese has put him full in light in the front; and given him a beautiful white silken jacket, barred with black, that nobody may ever miss seeing him to the end of time). He is a little shy about being presented to the Madonna, and for the present has got behind the pillar, blushing, but opening his black eyes wide; he is just summoning courage to peep round, and see if she looks kind. A still younger child, about six years old, is really frightened, and has run back to his mother, catching hold of her dress at the waist. She throws her right arm round him and over him, with exquisite instinctive action, not moving her eyes from the Madonna's face. Last of all, the youngest child, perhaps about three years old, is neither frightened nor interested, but finds the ceremony tedious, and is trying to coax the dog to play with him; but the dog, which is one of the little curly, short-nosed, fringy-pawed things, which all Venetian ladies petted, will not now be coaxed. For the dog is the last link in the chain of lowering feeling, and takes his doggish views of the matter. He cannot

understand, first, how the Madonna got into the house; nor, secondly, why she is allowed to stay, disturbing the family, and taking all their attention from his dogship. And he is walking away, much offended.

§ 22. The dog is thus constantly introduced by the Venetians in order to give the fullest contrast to the highest tones of human thought and feeling. I shall examine this point presently farther, in speaking of pastoral landscape and animal painting; but at present we will merely compare the use of the same mode of expression in Veronese's Presentation of the Queen of Sheba.

§ 23. This picture is at Turin, and is of quite inestimable value. It is hung high; and the really principal figure—the Solomon, being in the shade, can hardly be seen, but is painted with Veronese's utmost tenderness, in the bloom of perfect youth, his hair golden, short, crisply curled. He is seated high on his lion throne; two elders on each side beneath him, the whole group forming a tower of solemn shade. I have alluded, elsewhere, to the principle on which all the best composers act, of supporting these lofty groups by some vigorous mass of foundation. This column of noble shade is curiously sustained. A falconer leans forward from the left-hand side, bearing on his wrist a snow-white falcon, its wings spread, and brilliantly relieved against the purple robe of one of the elders. It touches with its wings one of the golden lions of the throne, on which the light also flashes strongly; thus forming, together with it, the lion and eagle symbol, which is the type of Christ throughout mediæval work. In order to show the meaning of this symbol, and that Solomon is typically invested with the Christian royalty, one of the elders, by a bold anachronism, holds a jewel in his hand of the shape of a cross, with which he (by accident of gesture) points to Solomon; his other hand is laid on an open book.

§ 24. The group opposite, of which the queen forms the centre, is also painted with Veronese's highest skill; but contains no point of interest bearing on our present subject, except its connection by a chain of descending emotion. The Queen is wholly oppressed and subdued; kneeling, and nearly fainting, she looks up to Solomon with tears in her eyes; he, startled by fear for her, stoops forward from the throne, opening his right hand, as if to support her, so as almost to drop the sceptre. At her side her first maid of honor is kneeling also, but does not care about Solomon; and is gathering up her dress that it may not be crushed; and looking back to encourage a negro girl, who, carrying two toy-birds, made of enamel and jewels, for presenting to the King, is frightened at seeing her Queen fainting, and does not know what she ought to do; while lastly, the Queen's dog, another of the little fringy-paws, is wholly unabashed by Solomon's presence, or anybody else's; and stands with his fore legs well apart, right in front of his mistress, thinking everybody has lost their wits; and barking violently at one of the attendants, who has set down a golden vase disrespectfully near him.

§ 25. Throughout these designs I want the reader to notice the purpose of representing things as they were likely to have occurred, down to trivial, or even ludicrous detail—the nobleness of all that was intended to be noble being so great that nothing could detract from it. A farther instance, however, and a prettier one, of this familiar realization, occurs in a Holy Family, by Veronese, at Brussels. The Madonna has laid the infant Christ on a projecting base of pillar, and stands behind, looking down on him. St. Catherine, having knelt down in front, the child turns round to receive her—so suddenly, and so far, that any other child must have fallen over the edge of the stone. St. Catherine, terrified, thinking he is really going to fall, stretches

out her arms to catch him. But the Madonna looking down, only smiles, "He will not fall."

§ 26. A more touching instance of this realization occurs, however, in the treatment of the saint Veronica (in the Ascent to Calvary), at Dresden. Most painters merely represent her as one of the gentle, weeping, attendant women; and show her giving the handkerchief as though these women had been allowed to approach Christ without any difficulty. But in Veronese's conception, she has to break through the executioners to him. She is not weeping; and the expression of pity, though intense, is overborne by that of resolution. She is determined to reach Christ; has set her teeth close, and thrusts aside one of the executioners, who strikes fiercely at her with a heavy doubled cord.

§ 27. These instances are enough to explain the general character of the mind of Veronese, capable of tragic power to the utmost, if he chooses to exert it in that direction, but, by habitual preference, exquisitely graceful and playful; religious without severity, and winningly noble; delighting in slight, sweet, every-day incident, but hiding deep meanings underneath it; rarely painting a gloomy subject, and never a base one.

§ 28. I have, in other places, entered enough into the examination of the great religious mind of Tintoret; supposing then that he was distinguished from Titian chiefly by this character. But in this I was mistaken; the religion of Titian is like that of Shakspeare—occult behind his magnificent equity. It is not possible, however, within the limits of this work, to give any just account of the mind of Titian: nor shall I attempt it; but will only explain some of those more strange and apparently inconsistent attributes of it, which might otherwise prevent the reader from getting clew to its real tone. The first of these is its occasional coarseness in choice of type of feature.

§ 29. In the second volume I had to speak of Titian's Magdalen, in the Pitti Palace, as treated basely, and that in strong terms, "the disgusting Magdalen of the Pitti."

Truly she is so as compared with the received types of the Magdalen. A stout, red-faced woman, dull, and coarse of feature, with much of the animal in even her expression of repentance — her eyes strained, and inflamed with weeping. I ought, however, to have remembered another picture of the Magdalen by Titian (Mr. Rogers's, now in the National Gallery), in which she is just as refined, as in the Pitti Palace she is gross; and had I done so, I should have seen Titian's meaning. It had been the fashion before his time to make the Magdalen always young and beautiful; her, if no one else, even the rudest painters flattered; her repentance was not thought perfect unless she had lustrous hair and lovely lips. Titian first dared to doubt the romantic fable, and reject the narrowness of sentimental faith. He saw that it was possible for plain women to love no less than beautiful ones, and for stout persons to repent as well as those more delicately made. It seemed to him that the Magdalen would have received her pardon not the less quickly because her wit was none of the readiest; and would not have been regarded with less compassion by her Master because her eyes were swollen, or her dress disordered. It is just because he has set himself sternly to enforce this lesson that the picture is so painful: the only instance, so far as I remember, of Titian's painting a woman markedly and entirely belonging to the lowest class.

§ 30. It may perhaps appear more difficult to account for the alternation of Titian's great religious pictures with others devoted wholly to the expression of sensual qualities, or to exulting and bright representation of heathen deities.

The Venetian mind, we have said, and Titian's especially, as the central type of it, was wholly realist, universal, and manly.

In this breadth and realism, the painter saw that sensual passion in man was, not only a fact, but a Divine fact; the human creature, though the highest of the animals, was, nevertheless, a perfect animal, and his happiness, health, and nobleness depended on the due power of every animal passion, as well as the cultivation of every spiritual tendency.

He thought that every feeling of the mind and heart, as well as every form of the body, deserved painting. Also to a painter's true and highly trained instinct, the human body is the loveliest of all objects. I do not stay to trace the reasons why, at Venice, the female body could be found in more perfect beauty than the male; but so it was, and it becomes the principal subject therefore, both with Giorgione and Titian. They painted it fearlessly, with all right and natural qualities; never, however, representing it as exercising any overpowering attractive influence on man; but only on the Faun or Satyr.

Yet they did this so majestically that I am perfectly certain no untouched Venetian picture ever yet excited one base thought (otherwise than in base persons anything may do so); while in the greatest studies of the female body by the Venetians, all other characters are overborne by majesty, and the form becomes as pure as that of a Greek statue.

§ 31. There is no need, I should think, to point out how this contemplation of the entire personal nature was reconcilable with the severest conceptions of religious duty and faith.

But the fond introduction of heathen gods may appear less explicable.

On examination, however, it will be found, that these

deities are never painted with any heart-reverence or affection. They are introduced for the most part symbolically (Bacchus and Venus oftenest, as incarnations of the spirit of revelry and beauty), of course always conceived with deep imaginative truth, much resembling the mode of Keats's conception; but never so as to withdraw any of the deep devotion referred to the objects of Christian faith.

In all its roots of power, and modes of work;—in its belief, its breadth, and its judgment, I find the Venetian mind perfect.

How, then, did its art so swiftly pass away? How become, what it became unquestionably, one of the chief causes of the corruption of the mind of Italy, and of her subsequent decline in moral and political power?

§ 32. By reason of one great, one fatal fault;—recklessness in aim. Wholly noble in its sources, it was wholly unworthy in its purposes.

Separate and strong, like Samson, chosen from its youth, and with the spirit of God visibly resting on it —like him, it warred in careless strength, and wantoned in untimely pleasure. No Venetian painter ever worked with any aim beyond that of delighting the eye, or expressing fancies agreeable to himself or flattering to his nation. They could not be either unless they were religious. But he did not desire the religion. He desired the delight.

The Assumption is a noble picture, because Titian believed in the Madonna. But he did not paint it to make any one else believe in her. He painted it because he enjoyed rich masses of red and blue, and faces flushed with sunlight.

Tintoret's Paradise is a noble picture, because he believed in Paradise. But he did not paint it to make any one think of heaven; but to form a beautiful termination for the hall of the greater council.

Other men used their effete faiths and mean faculties with a high moral purpose. The Venetian gave the most earnest faith, and the lordliest faculty, to gild the shadows of an ante-chamber, or heighten the splendors of a holiday.

§ 33. Strange, and lamentable as this carelessness may appear, I find it to be almost the law with the great workers. Weak and vain men have acute consciences, and labor under a profound sense of responsibility. The strong men, sternly disdainful of themselves, do what they can, too often merely as it pleases them at the moment, reckless what comes of it.

I know not how far in humility, or how far in bitter and hopeless levity, the great Venetians gave their art to be blasted by the sea-winds or wasted by the worm. I know not whether in sorrowful obedience, or in wanton compliance, they fostered the folly, and enriched the luxury of their age. This only I know, that in proportion to the greatness of their power was the shame of its desecration and the suddenness of its fall. The enchanter's spell, woven by centuries of toil, was broken in the weakness of a moment; and swiftly, and utterly, as a rainbow vanishes, the radiance and the strength faded from the wings of the Lion.

CHAPTER IV.

DURER AND SALVATOR.

"EMIGRAVIT."

§ 1. By referring to the first analysis of our subject, it will be seen we have next to examine the art which cannot conquer the evil, but remains at war with, or in captivity to it.

Up to the time of the Reformation it was possible for men even of the highest powers of intellect to obtain a tranquillity of faith, in the highest degree favorable to the pursuit of any particular art. Possible, at least, we see it to have been; there is no need—nor, so far as I see, any ground, for argument about it. I am myself unable to understand how it was so; but the fact is unquestionable. It is not that I wonder at men's trust in the Pope's infallibility, or in his virtue; nor at their surrendering their private judgment; nor at their being easily cheated by imitations of miracles; nor at their thinking indulgences could be purchased with money. But I wonder at this one thing only; the acceptance of the doctrine of eternal punishment as dependent on accident of birth, or momentary excitement of devotional feeling. I marvel at the acceptance of the system (as stated in its fulness by Dante) which condemned guiltless persons to the loss of heaven because they had lived before Christ, and which made the obtaining of Paradise turn frequently on a passing thought or a momentary invocation. How this came to pass, it is no part of our

work here to determine. That in this faith, it was possible to attain entire peace of mind; to live calmly, and die hopefully, is indisputable.

§ 2. But this possibility ceased at the Reformation. Thenceforward human life became a school of debate, troubled and fearful. Fifteen hundred years of spiritual teaching were called into fearful question, whether indeed it had been teaching by angels or devils? Whatever it had been, there was no longer any way of trusting it peacefully.

A dark time for all men. We cannot now conceive it. The great horror of it lay in this:—that, as in the trial-hour of the Greek, the heavens themselves seemed to have deceived those who had trusted in them.

"We had prayed with tears; we had loved with our hearts. There was no choice of way open to us. No guidance from God or man, other than this, and behold, it was a lie. 'When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He shall guide you into all truth.' And He has guided us into *no* truth. There can be no such Spirit. There is no Advocate, no Comforter. Has there been no Resurrection?"

§ 3. Then came the Resurrection of Death. Never since man first saw him, face to face, had his terror been so great. "Swallowed up in victory:" alas! no; but king over all the earth. All faith, hope, and fond belief were betrayed. Nothing of futurity was now sure but the grave.

For the Pan-Athenaic Triumph and the Feast of Jubilee, there came up, through fields of spring, the dance of Death.

The brood of weak men fled from the face of him. A new Bacchus and his crew this, with worm for snake and gall for wine. They recoiled to such pleasure as yet remained possible to them—feeble infidelities, and luxurious sciences, and so went their way.

§ 4. At least, of the men with whom we are concerned —the artists—this was almost the universal faith. They gave themselves to the following of pleasure only; and as a religious school, after a few pale rays of fading sanctity from Guido, and brown gleams of gypsy Madonnahood from Murillo, came utterly to an end.

Three men only stood firm, facing the new Dionysiac revel, to see what would come of it.

Two in the north, Holbein and Durer, and, later, one in the south, Salvator.

But the ground on which they stood differed strangely; Durer and Holbein, amidst the formal delights, the tender religions, and practical science, of domestic life and honest commerce. Salvator, amidst the pride of lascivious wealth, and the outlawed distress of impious poverty.

§ 5. It would be impossible to imagine any two phases of scenery or society more contrary in character, more opposite in teaching, than those surrounding Nuremberg and Naples, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. What they were then, both districts still to all general intents remain. The cities have in each case lost their splendor and power, but not their character. The surrounding scenery remains wholly unchanged. It is still in our power, from the actual aspect of the places, to conceive their effect on the youth of the two painters.

§ 6. Nuremberg is gathered at the base of a sandstone rock, rising in the midst of a dry but fertile plain. The rock forms a prolonged and curved ridge, of which the concave side, at the highest point, is precipitous; the other slopes gradually to the plain. Fortified with wall and tower along its whole crest, and crowned with a stately castle, it defends the city—not with its precipitous side—but with its slope. The precipice is turned to the town. It wears no aspect of hostility towards the surrounding fields; the roads lead down into them by

gentle descents from the gates. To the south and east the walls are on the level of the plain; within them, the city itself stands on two swells of hill, divided by a winding river. Its architecture has, however, been much overrated. The effect of the streets, so delightful to the eye of the passing traveller, depends chiefly on one appendage of the roof, namely, its warehouse windows. Every house, almost without exception, has at least one boldly opening dormer window, the roof of which sustains a pulley for raising goods; and the underpart of this strong overhanging roof is always carved with a rich pattern, not of refined design, but effective.* Among these comparatively modern structures are mingled, however, not unfrequently, others, turreted at the angles, which are true Gothic of the fifteenth, some of the fourteenth, century; and the principal churches remain nearly as in Durer's time. Their Gothic is none of it good, nor even rich (though the façades have their ornaments so distributed as to give them a sufficiently elaborate effect at a distance); their size is diminutive; their interiors mean, rude, and ill-proportioned, wholly dependent for their interest on ingenious stone-cutting in corners, and finely twisted ironwork; of these the mason's exercises are in the worst possible taste, possessing not even the merit of delicate execution; but the designs in metal are usually meritorious, and Fischer's shrine of St. Sebald is good, and may rank with Italian work.†

* To obtain room for the goods, the roofs slope steeply, and their other dormer windows are richly carved—but all are of wood; and, for the most part, I think, some hundred years later than Durer's time. A large number of the oriel and bow windows on the façades are wooden also, and of recent date.

† His piece in the cathedral of Magdeburg is strangely inferior, wanting both the grace of composition and bold handling of the St. Sebald's. The bronze fountains at Nuremberg (three, of fame, in as many squares) are highly wrought, and have considerable merit; the

§ 7. Though, however, not comparable for an instant to any great Italian or French city, Nuremberg possesses one character peculiar to itself, that of a self-restrained, contented, quaint domesticity. It would be vain to expect any first-rate painting, sculpture, or poetry, from the well-regulated community of merchants of small ware. But it is evident they were affectionate and trustworthy —that they had playful fancy, and honorable pride. There is no exalted grandeur in their city, nor any deep beauty; but an imaginative homeliness, mingled with some elements of melancholy and power, and a few even of grace.

This homeliness, among many other causes, arises out of one in chief. The richness of the houses depends, as I have just said, on the dormer windows: but their deeper character on the pitch and space of roofs. I had to notice long ago how much our English cottage depended for expression on its steep roof. The German house does so in far greater degree. Plate 76 is engraved * from a slight pen-and-ink sketch of mine on the ramparts of Nuremberg, showing a piece of its moat and wall, and a little corner of the city beneath the castle; of which the tower on the extreme right rises just in front of Durer's house. The character of this scene approaches more nearly that which Durer would see in his daily walks, than most of the modernized inner streets. In Durer's own engraving, "The Cannon," the distance

ordinary ironwork of the houses, with less pretension, is, perhaps, more truly artistic. In Plate 53, the right-hand figure is a characteristic example of the bell-handle at the door of a private house, composed of a wreath of flowers and leafage twisted in a spiral round an upright rod, the spiral terminating below in a delicate tendril; the whole of wrought iron. It is longer than represented, some of the leaf-links of the chain being omitted in the dotted spaces, as well as the handle, which, though often itself of leafage, is always convenient for the hand.

* By Mr. Le Keux, very admirably.

PLATE LXXVI.—THE MOAT OF NUREMBERG.

(of which the most important passage is facsimiled in my Elements of Drawing, p. 111) is an actual portrait of part of the landscape seen from those castle ramparts, looking towards Franconian Switzerland.

§ 8. If the reader will be at the pains to turn to it, he will see at a glance the elements of the Nuremberg country, as they still exist. Wooden cottages, thickly grouped, enormously high in the roofs; the sharp church spire, small and slightly grotesque, surmounting them; beyond, a richly cultivated, healthy plain bounded by woody hills. By a strange coincidence the very plant which constitutes the staple produce of those fields, is in almost ludicrous harmony with the grotesqueness and neatness of the architecture around; and one may almost fancy that the builders of the little knotted spires and turrets of the town, and workers of its dark iron flowers, are in spiritual presence, watching and guiding the produce of the field,—when one finds the footpaths bordered everywhere, by the bossy spires and lustrous jetty flowers of the black hollyhock.

§ 9. Lastly, when Durer penetrated among those hills of Franconia he would find himself in a pastoral country, much resembling the Gruyère districts of Switzerland, but less thickly inhabited, and giving in its steep, though not lofty, rocks,—its scattered pines,—and its fortresses and chapels, the motives of all the wilder landscape introduced by the painter in such pieces as his St. Jerome, or St. Hubert. His continual and forced introduction of sea in almost every scene, much as it seems to me to be regretted, is possibly owing to his happy recollections of the sea-city where he received the rarest of all rewards granted to a good workman; and, for once in his life, was understood.

§ 10. Among this pastoral simplicity and formal sweetness of domestic peace, Durer had to work out his ques-

tion concerning the grave. It haunted him long; he learned to engrave death's heads well before he had done with it; looked deeper than any other man into those strange rings, their jewels lost; and gave answer at last conclusively in his great Knight and Death—of which more presently. But while the Nuremberg landscape is still fresh in our minds, we had better turn south quickly and compare the elements of education which formed, and of creation which companioned, Salvator.

§ 11. Born with a wild and coarse nature (how coarse I will show you soon), but nevertheless an honest one, he set himself in youth hotly to the war, and cast himself carelessly on the current of life. No rectitude of ledger-lines stood in his way; no tender precision of household customs; no calm successions of rural labor. But past his half-starved lips rolled profusion of pitiless wealth; before him glared and swept the troops of shameless pleasure. Above him muttered Vesuvius; beneath his feet shook the Solfatara.

In heart disdainful, in temper adventurous; conscious of power, impatient of labor, and yet more of the pride of the patrons of his youth, he fled to the Calabrian hills, seeking, not knowledge, but freedom. If he was to be surrounded by cruelty and deceit, let them at least be those of brave men or savage beasts, not of the timorous and the contemptible. Better the wrath of the robber, than enmity of the priest; and the cunning of the wolf than of the hypocrite.

§ 12. We are accustomed to hear the south of Italy spoken of as a beautiful country. Its mountain forms are graceful above others, its sea-bays exquisite in outline and hue; but it is only beautiful in superficial aspect. In closer detail it is wild and melancholy. Its forests are sombre-leafed, labyrinth-stemmed; the carubbe, the olive, laurel, and ilex, are alike in that strange

feverish twisting of their branches, as if in spasms of half human pain:—Avernus forests; one fears to break their boughs, lest they should cry to us from their rents; the rocks they shade are of ashes, or thrice-molten lava; iron sponge, whose every pore has been filled with fire. Silent villages, earthquake-shaken, without commerce, without industry, without knowledge, without hope, gleam in white ruin from hillside to hillside; far-winding wrecks of immemorial walls surround the dust of cities long forsaken: the mountain streams moan through the cold arches of their foundations, green with weed, and rage over the heaps of their fallen towers. Far above, in thunder-blue serration, stand the eternal edges of the angry Apennine, dark with rolling impendence of volcanic cloud.

§ 13. Yet even among such scenes as these, Salvator might have been calmed and exalted, had he been, indeed, capable of exaltation. But he was not of high temper enough to perceive beauty. He had not the sacred sense—the sense of color; all the loveliest hues of the Calabrian air were invisible to him; the sorrowful desolation of the Calabrian villages unfelt. He saw only what was gross and terrible,—the jagged peak, the splintered tree, the flowerless bank of grass, and wandering weed, prickly and pale. His temper confirmed itself in evil, and became more and more fierce and morose; though not, I believe, cruel, ungenerous, or lascivious. I should not suspect Salvator of wantonly inflicting pain. His constantly painting it does not prove he delighted in it; he felt the horror of it, and in that horror, fascination. Also, he desired fame, and saw that here was an untried field rich enough in morbid excitement to catch the humor of his indolent patrons. But the gloom gained upon him, and grasped him. He could jest, indeed, as men jest in prison-yards (he became afterwards a renowned mime in Florence); his sat-

ires are full of good mocking, but his own doom to sadness is never repealed.

§ 14. Of all men whose work I have ever studied, he gives me most distinctly the idea of a lost spirit. Michelet calls him "Ce damné Salvator," perhaps in a sense merely harsh and violent; the epithet to me seems true in a more literal, more merciful sense,—"That condemned Salvator." I see in him, notwithstanding all his baseness, the last traces of spiritual life in the art of Europe. He was the last man to whom the thought of a spiritual existence presented itself as a conceivable reality. All succeeding men, however powerful—Rembrandt, Rubens, Vandyck, Reynolds—would have mocked at the idea of a spirit. They were men of the world; they are never in earnest, and they are never appalled. But Salvator was capable of pensiveness, of faith, and of fear. The misery of the earth is a marvel to him; he cannot leave off gazing at it. The religion of the earth is a horror to him. He gnashes his teeth at it, rages at it, mocks and gibes at it. He would have acknowledged religion, had he seen any that was true. Anything rather than that baseness which he did see. "If there is no other religion than this of pope and cardinals, let us to the robber's ambush and the dragon's den." He was capable of fear also. The gray spectre, horse-headed, striding across the sky—(in the Pitti Palace)—its bat wings spread, green bars of the twilight seen between its bones; it was no play to him—the painting of it. Helpless Salvator! A little early sympathy, a word of true guidance, perhaps, had saved him. What says he of himself? "Despiser of wealth and of death." Two grand scorns; but, oh, condemned Salvator! the question is not for man what he can scorn, but what he can love.

§ 15. I do not care to trace the various hold which Hades takes on this fallen soul. It is no part of my

work here to analyze his art, nor even that of Durer; all that we need to note is the opposite answer they gave to the question about death.

To Salvator it came in narrow terms. Desolation, without hope, throughout the fields of nature he had to explore; hypocrisy and sensuality, triumphant and shameless, in the cities from which he derived his support. His life, so far as any nobility remained in it, could only pass in horror, disdain, or despair. It is difficult to say which of the three prevails most in his common work; but his answer to the great question was of despair only. He represents "Umana Fragilita" by the type of a skeleton with plumy wings, leaning over a woman and child; the earth covered with ruin round them—a thistle, casting its seed, the only fruit of it. "Thorns, also, and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." The same tone of thought marks all Salvator's more earnest work.

§ 16. On the contrary, in the sight of Durer, things were for the most part as they ought to be. Men did their work in his city and in the fields round it. The clergy were sincere. Great social questions unagitated; great social evils either non-existent, or seemingly a part of the nature of things, and inevitable. His answer was that of patient hope, and two-fold, consisting of one design in praise of Fortitude, and another in praise of Labor. The Fortitude, commonly known as the "Knight and Death," represents a knight riding through a dark valley overhung by leafless trees, and with a great castle on a hill beyond. Beside him, but a little in advance, rides Death on a pale horse. Death is gray-haired and crowned;—serpents wreathed about his crown; (the sting of death involved in the kingly power). He holds up the hour-glass, and looks earnestly into the knight's face. Behind him follows Sin; but Sin powerless; he has been conquered and passed

by; but follows yet, watching if any way of assault remains. On his forehead are two horns—I think, of sea-shell—to indicate his insatiableness and instability. He has also the twisted horns of the ram, for stubbornness, the ears of an ass, the snout of a swine, the hoofs of a goat. Torn wings hang useless from his shoulders, and he carries a spear with two hooks, for catching as well as wounding. The knight does not heed him, nor even Death, though he is conscious of the presence of the last.

He rides quietly, his bridle firm in his hand, and his lips set close in a slight sorrowful smile, for he hears what Death is saying; and hears it as the word of a messenger who brings pleasant tidings, thinking to bring evil ones. A little branch of delicate heath is twisted round his helmet. His horse trots proudly and straight; its head high, and with a cluster of oak on the brow where on the fiend's brow is the sea-shell horn. But the horse of Death stoops its head; and its rein catches the little bell which hangs from the knight's horse-bridle, making it toll, as a passing bell.*

§ 17. Durer's second answer is the plate of "Melencholia," which is the history of the sorrowful toil of the earth, as the "Knight and Death" is of its sorrowful patience under temptation.

Salvator's answer, remember, is in both respects that of despair. Death as he reads, lord of temptation, is victor over the spirit of man; and lord of ruin, is victor over the work of man. Durer declares the sad, but unsullied

* This was first pointed out to me by a friend—Mr. Robin Allen. It is a beautiful thought; yet, possibly, an after-thought. I have some suspicion that there is an alteration in the plate at that place, and that the rope to which the bell hangs was originally the line of the chest of the nearer horse, as the grass-blades about the lifted hind leg conceal the lines which could not, in Durer's way of work, be effaced, indicating its first intended position. What a proof of his general decision of handling is involved in this "repentir!"

conquest over Death the tempter; and the sad, but enduring conquest over Death the destroyer.

§ 18. Though the general intent of the Melencholia is clear, and to be felt at a glance, I am in some doubt respecting its special symbolism. I do not know how far Durer intended to show that labor, in many of its most earnest forms, is closely connected with the morbid sadness, or "dark anger," of the northern nations. Truly some of the best work ever done for man, has been in that dark anger;* but I have not yet been able to determine for myself how far this is necessary, or how far great work may also be done with cheerfulness. If I knew what the truth was, I should be able to interpret Durer better; meantime the design seems to me his answer to the complaint, "Yet is his strength labor and sorrow."

"Yes," he replies, "but labor and sorrow are his strength."

§ 19. The labor indicated is in the daily work of men. Not the inspired or gifted labor of the few (it is labor connected with the sciences, not with the arts), shown in its four chief functions: thoughtful, faithful, calculating, and executing.

Thoughtful, first; all true power coming of that resolved, resistless calm of melancholy thought. This is the first and last message of the whole design. Faithful, the right arm of the spirit resting on the book. Calculating (chiefly in the sense of self-command), the compasses in her right hand. Executive—roughest instruments of labor at her feet: a crucible, and geometrical solids, indicating her work in the sciences. Over her

* "Yet withal, you see that the Monarch is a great, valiant, cautious, melancholy, commanding man."—Friends in Council, last volume, p. 269; Milverton giving an account of Titian's picture of Charles the Fifth. (Compare Ellesmere's description of Milverton himself, p. 140.) Read carefully also what is said further on respecting Titian's freedom, and fearless withholding of flattery; comparing it with the note on Giorgione and Titian.

head the hour-glass and the bell, for their continual words, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do." Beside her, childish labor (lesson-learning?) sitting on an old millstone, with a tablet on its knees. I do not know what instrument it has in its hand. At her knees, a wolf-hound asleep. In the distance, a comet (the disorder and threatening of the universe) setting, the rainbow dominant over it. Her strong body is close girded for work; at her waist hang the keys of wealth; but the coin is cast aside contemptuously under her feet. She has eagles' wings, and is crowned with fair leafage of spring.

Yes, Albert of Nuremberg, it was a noble answer, yet an imperfect one. This is indeed the labor which is crowned with laurel and has the wings of the eagle. It was reserved for another country to prove, for another hand to portray, the labor which is crowned with fire, and has the wings of the bat.

CHAPTER V.

CLAUDE AND POUSSIN.

§ 1. It was stated in the last chapter that Salvator was the last painter of Italy on whom any fading trace of the old faithful spirit rested. Carrying some of its passion far into the seventeenth century, he deserved to be remembered together with the painters whom the questioning of the Reformation had exercised, eighty years before. Not so his contemporaries. The whole body of painters around him, but chiefly those of landscape, had cast aside all regard for the faith of their fathers, or for any other; and founded a school of art properly called "classical,"* of which the following are the chief characteristics.

§ 2. The belief in a supreme benevolent Being having ceased, and the sense of spiritual destitution fastening on the mind, together with the hopeless perception of ruin and decay in the existing world, the imagination sought to quit itself from the oppression of these ideas by realizing a perfect worldly felicity, in which the inevitable ruin should at least be lovely, and the necessarily short life entirely happy and refined. Labor must be banished, since it was to be unrewarded. Humiliation and degradation of body must be prevented, since there

* The word "classical" is carelessly used in the preceding volumes, to signify the characters of the Greek or Roman nations. Henceforward, it is used in a limited and accurate sense, as defined in the text.

could be no compensation for them by preparation of the soul for another world. Let us eat and drink (refinedly), for to-morrow we die, and attain the highest possible dignity as men in this world, since we shall have none as spirits in the next.

§ 3. Observe, this is neither the Greek nor the Roman spirit. Neither Claude, nor Poussin, nor any other painter or writer, properly termed "classical," ever could enter into the Greek or Roman heart, which was as full, in many cases fuller, of the hope of immortality than our own.

On the absence of belief in a good supreme Being, follows, necessarily, the habit of looking to ourselves for supreme judgment in all matters, and for supreme government. Hence, first, the irreverent habit of judgment instead of admiration. It is generally expressed under the justly degrading term "good taste."

§ 4. Hence, in the second place, the habit of restraint or self-government (instead of impulsive and limitless obedience), based upon pride, and involving, for the most part, scorn of the helpless and weak, and respect only for the orders of men who have been trained to this habit of self-government. Whence the title classical, from the Latin *classicus*.

§ 5. The school is, therefore, generally to be characterized as that of taste and restraint. As the school of taste, everything is, in its estimation, beneath it, so as to be tasted or tested; not above it, to be thankfully received. Nothing was to be fed upon as bread; but only palated as a dainty. This spirit has destroyed art since the close of the sixteenth century, and nearly destroyed French literature, our English literature being at the same time severely depressed, and our education (except in bodily strength) rendered nearly nugatory by it, so far as it affects common-place minds. It is not possible that the classical spirit should ever

take possession of a mind of the highest order. Pope is, as far as I know, the greatest man who ever fell strongly under its influence; and though it spoiled half his work, he broke through it continually into true enthusiasm and tender thought.* Again, as the school of reserve, it refuses to allow itself in any violent or "spasmodic" passion; the schools of literature which have been in modern times called "spasmodic," being reactionary against it. The word, though an ugly one, is quite accurate, the most spasmodic books in the world being Solomon's Song, Job, and Isaiah.

§ 6. The classical landscape, properly so called, is therefore the representative of perfectly trained and civilized human life, associated with perfect natural scenery and with decorative spiritual powers.

I will expand this definition a little.

1. Perfectly civilized human life; that is, life freed from the necessity of humiliating labor, from passions inducing bodily disease, and from abusing misfortune. The personages of the classical landscape, therefore, must be virtuous and amiable; if employed in labor, endowed with strength such as may make it not oppressive. (Considered as a practicable ideal, the classical life necessarily implies slavery, and the command, therefore, of a higher order of men over a lower, occupied in servile work.) Pastoral occupation is allowable as a contrast with city life. War, if undertaken by classical persons, must be a contest for honor, more than for life, not at all for wealth,† and free from all fearful or debasing passion. Classical persons must be trained in all the po-

* Cold-hearted I have called him. He was so in writing the Pastorals, of which I then spoke; but in after-life his errors were those of his time, his wisdom was his own; it would be well if we also made it ours.

† Because the pursuit of wealth is inconsistent at once with the peace and dignity of perfect life.

lite arts, and, because their health is to be perfect, chiefly in the open air. Hence, the architecture around them must be of the most finished kind, the rough country and ground being subdued by frequent and happy humanity.

§ 7. 2. Such personages and buildings must be associated with natural scenery, uninjured by storms or inclemency of climate (such injury implying interruption of the open air life); and it must be scenery conducing to pleasure, not to material service; all cornfields, orchards, olive-yards, and such like, being under the management of slaves,* and the superior beings having nothing to do with them; but passing their lives under avenues of scented and otherwise delightful trees—under picturesque rocks, and by clear fountains.

§ 8. 3. The spiritual powers in classical scenery must be decorative; ornamental gods, not governing gods; otherwise they could not be subjected to the principles of taste, but would demand reverence. In order, therefore, as far as possible, without taking away their supernatural power, to destroy their dignity, they are made more criminal and capricious than men, and, for the most part, those only are introduced who are the lords of lascivious pleasures. For the appearance of any great god would at once destroy the whole theory of the classical life; therefore, Pan, Bacchus, and the Satyrs, with Venus and the Nymphs, are the principal spiritual powers of the classical landscape. Apollo with the Muses appear as the patrons of the liberal arts. Minerva rarely presents herself (except to be insulted by judgment of

* It is curious, as marking the peculiarity of the classical spirit in its resolute degradation of the lower orders, that a sailing vessel is hardly admissible in a classical landscape, because its management implies too much elevation of the inferior life. But a galley, with oars, is admissible, because the rowers may be conceived as absolute slaves.

Paris); Juno seldom, except for some purpose of tyranny; Jupiter seldom, but for purpose of amour.

§ 9. Such being the general ideal of the classical landscape, it can hardly be necessary to show the reader how such charm as it possesses must in general be strong only over weak or second-rate orders of mind. It has, however, been often experimentally or playfully aimed at by great men; but I shall only take note of its two leading masters.

§ 10. I. Claude. As I shall have no farther occasion to refer to this painter, I will resume, shortly, what has been said of him throughout the work. He had a fine feeling for beauty of form and considerable tenderness of perception. Vol. I., p. 158; Vol. III., p. 398. His aërial effects are unequalled. Vol. III., p. 398. Their character appears to me to arise rather from a delicacy of bodily constitution in Claude, than from any mental sensibility; such as they are, they give a kind of feminine charm to his work, which partly accounts for its wide influence. To whatever the character may be traced, it renders him incapable of enjoying or painting anything energetic or terrible. Hence the weakness of his conceptions of rough sea. Vol. I., p. 159.

II. He had sincerity of purpose. Vol. III., p. 398. But in common with other landscape painters of his day, neither earnestness, humility, nor love, such as would ever cause him to forget himself. Vol. I., p. 159.

That is to say, so far as he felt the truth, he tried to be true; but he never felt it enough to sacrifice supposed propriety, or habitual method to it. Very few of his sketches, and none of his pictures, show evidence of interest in other natural phenomena than the quiet afternoon sunshine which would fall methodically into a composition. One would suppose he had never seen scarlet in a morning cloud, nor a storm burst on the Apennines. But he enjoys a quiet misty afternoon in a ruminant sort

of way (Vol. III., p. 403), yet truly; and strives for the likeness of it, therein differing from Salvator, who never attempts to be truthful, but only to be impressive.

§ 11. III. His seas are the most beautiful in old art. Vol. II., p. 116. For he studied tame waves, as he did tame skies, with great sincerity, and some affection; and modelled them with more care not only than any other landscape painter of his day, but even than any of the greater men; for they, seeing the perfect painting of sea to be impossible, gave up the attempt, and treated it conventionally. But Claude took so much pains about this, feeling it was one of his *fortes*, that I suppose no one can model a small wave better than he.

IV. He first set the pictorial sun in the pictorial heaven. Vol. III., p. 398. We will give him the credit of this, with no drawbacks.

V. He had hardly any knowledge of physical science (Vol. I., p. 158), and shows a peculiar incapacity of understanding the main point of a matter. Vol. III., p. 402. Connected with which incapacity is his want of harmony in expression. Vol. II., p. 181. (Compare, for illustration of this, the account of the picture of the Mill in the preface to Vol. I.)

§ 12. Such were the principal qualities of the leading painter of classical landscape, his effeminate softness carrying him to dislike all evidences of toil, or distress, or terror, and to delight in the calm formalities which mark the school.

Although he often introduces romantic incidents and mediæval as well as Greek or Roman personages, his landscape is always in the true sense classic—everything being "elegantly" (selectingly or tastefully), not passionately, treated. The absence of indications of rural labor, of hedges, ditches, haystacks, ploughed fields, and the like; the frequent occurrence of ruins of temples, or masses of unruined palaces; and the graceful wildness

of growth in his trees, are the principal sources of the "elevated" character which so many persons feel in his scenery.

There is no other sentiment traceable in his work than this weak dislike to entertain the conception of toil or suffering. Ideas of relation, in the true sense, he has none; nor ever makes an effort to conceive an event in its probable circumstances, but fills his foregrounds with decorative figures, using commonest conventionalism to indicate the subject he intends. We may take two examples, merely to show the general character of such designs of his.

§ 13. 1. St. George and the Dragon.

The scene is a beautiful opening in woods by a river side, a pleasant fountain springs on the right, and the usual rich vegetation covers the foreground. The dragon is about the size of ten bramble leaves, and is being killed by the remains of a lance, barely the thickness of a walking-stick, in his throat, curling his tail in a highly offensive and threatening manner. St. George, notwithstanding, on a prancing horse, brandishes his sword, at about thirty yards' distance from the offensive animal.

A semicircular shelf of rocks encircles the foreground, by which the theatre of action is divided into pit and boxes. Some women and children having descended unadvisedly into the pit, are helping each other out of it again, with marked precipitation. A prudent person of rank has taken a front seat in the boxes — crosses his legs, leans his head on his hand, and contemplates the proceedings with the air of a connoisseur. Two attendants stand in graceful attitudes behind him, and two more walk away under the trees, conversing on general subjects.

§ 14. 2. Worship of the Golden Calf.

The scene is nearly the same as that of the St. George; but, in order better to express the desert of Sinai, the

river is much larger, and the trees and vegetation softer. Two people, uninterested in the idolatrous ceremonies, are rowing in a pleasure boat on the river. The calf is about sixteen inches long (perhaps, we ought to give Claude credit for remembering that it was made of ear-rings, though he might as well have inquired how large Egyptian ear-rings were). Aaron has put it on a handsome pillar, under which five people are dancing, and twenty-eight, with several children, worshipping. Refreshments for the dancers are provided in four large vases under a tree on the left, presided over by a dignified person holding a dog in a leash. Under the distant group of trees appears Moses, conducted by some younger personage (Nadab or Abihu). This younger personage holds up his hands, and Moses, in the way usually expected of him, breaks the tables of the law, which are as large as an ordinary octavo volume.

§ 15. I need not proceed farther, for any reader of sense or ordinary powers of thought can thus examine the subjects of Claude, one by one, for himself. We may quit him with these few final statements concerning him.

The admiration of his works was legitimate, so far as it regarded their sunlight effects and their graceful details. It was base, in so far as it involved irreverence both for the deeper powers of nature, and carelessness as to conception of subject. Large admiration of Claude is wholly impossible in any period of national vigor in art. He may by such tenderness as he possesses, and by the very fact of his banishing painfulness, exercise considerable influence over certain classes of minds; but this influence is almost exclusively hurtful to them.

§ 16. Nevertheless, on account of such small sterling qualities as they possess, and of their general pleasantness, as well as their importance in the history of art, genuine Claudes must always possess a considerable value, either as drawing-room ornaments or museum

relics. They may be ranked with fine pieces of China manufacture, and other agreeable curiosities, of which the price depends on the rarity rather than the merit, yet always on a merit of a certain low kind.

§ 17. The other characteristic master of classical landscape is Nicolo Poussin.

I named Claude first, because the forms of scenery he has represented are richer and more general than Poussin's; but Poussin has a far greater power, and his landscapes, though more limited in material, are incomparably nobler than Claude's. It would take considerable time to enter into accurate analysis of Poussin's strong but degraded mind; and bring us no reward, because whatever he has done has been done better by Titian. His peculiarities are, without exception, weaknesses, induced in a highly intellectual and inventive mind by being fed on medals, books, and bassi-relievi instead of nature, and by the want of any deep sensibility. His best works are his Bacchanalian revels, always brightly wanton and wild, full of frisk and fire; but they are coarser than Titian's, and infinitely less beautiful. In all minglings of the human and brutal character he leans on the bestial, yet with a sternly Greek severity of treatment. This restraint, peculiarly classical, is much too manifest in him; for, owing to his habit of never letting himself be free, he does nothing as well as it ought to be done, rarely even as well as he can himself do it; and his best beauty is poor, incomplete, and characterless, though refined. The Nymph pressing the honey in the "Nursing of Jupiter," and the Muse leaning against the tree, in the "Inspiration of Poet" (both in the Dulwich Gallery), appear to me examples of about his highest reach in this sphere.

§ 18. His want of sensibility permits him to paint frightful subjects, without feeling any true horror: his pictures of the Plague, the Death of Polydectes, &c., are

thus ghastly in incident, sometimes disgusting, but never impressive. The prominence of the bleeding head in the Triumph of David marks the same temper. His battle pieces are cold and feeble; his religious subjects wholly nugatory, they do not excite him enough to develop even his ordinary powers of invention. Neither does he put much power into his landscape when it becomes principal; the best pieces of it occur in fragments behind his figures. Beautiful vegetation, more or less ornamental in character, occurs in nearly all his mythological subjects, but his pure landscape is notable only for its dignified reserve; the great squareness and horizontality of its masses, with lowness of tone, giving it a deeply meditative character. His Deluge might be much depreciated, under this head of ideas of relation, but it is so uncharacteristic of him that I pass it by. Whatever power this lowness of tone, light in the distance, &c., give to his landscape, or to Gaspar's (compare Vol. II., Chapter on Infinity, § 12), is in both conventional and artificial.

I have nothing, therefore, to add farther, here, to what was said of him in Vol. I. (p. 174); and, as no other older masters of the classical landscape are worth any special note, we will pass on at once to a school of humbler but more vital power.

CHAPTER VI.

RUBENS AND CUYP.

§ 1. The examination of the causes which led to the final departure of the religious spirit from the hearts of painters, would involve discussion of the whole scope of the Reformation on the minds of persons unconcerned directly in its progress. This is of course impossible.

One or two broad facts only can be stated, which the reader may verify, if he pleases, by his own labor. I do not give them rashly.

§ 2. The strength of the Reformation lay entirely in its being a movement towards purity of practice.

The Catholic priesthood was hostile to it in proportion to the degree in which they had been false to their own principles of moral action, and had become corrupt or worldly in heart.

The Reformers indeed cast out many absurdities, and demonstrated many fallacies, in the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. But they themselves introduced errors, which rent the ranks, and finally arrested the march of the Reformation, and which paralyze the Protestant Church to this day. Errors of which the fatality was increased by the controversial bent which lost accuracy of meaning in force of declamation, and turned expressions, which ought to be used only in retired depth of thought, into phrases of custom, or watchwords of attack. Owing to which habits of hot, ingenious, and unguarded controversy, the Reformed

churches themselves soon forgot the meaning of the word which, of all words, was oftenest in their mouths. They forgot that πίστις is a derivative of πείθομαι, not of πιστεύω, and that "fides," closely connected with "fio" on one side, and with "confido" on the other, is but distantly related to "credo." *

§ 3. By whatever means, however, the reader may himself be disposed to admit, the Reformation *was* arrested; and got itself shut up into chancels of cathedrals in England (even those, generally too large for it), and into conventicles everywhere else. Then rising between the infancy of Reformation, and the palsy of Catholicism;—between a new shell of half-built religion on one side, daubed with untempered mortar, and a falling ruin of outworn religion on the other, lizard-crannied, and ivy-grown;—rose, on its independent foundation, the faithless and materialized mind of modern Europe—ending in the rationalism of Germany, the polite formalism of England, the careless blasphemy of France, and the helpless sensualities of Italy; in the midst of which, steadily advancing science, and the charities of more and more widely extended peace, are preparing the way for a Christian church, which shall depend, neither on ignorance for its continuance, nor on controversy for its progress; but shall reign at once in light, and love.

§ 4. The whole body of painters (such of them as were left) necessarily fell into the rationalistic chasm. The

* None of our present forms of opinion are more curious than those which have developed themselves from this verbal carelessness. It never seems to strike any of our religious teachers, that if a child has a father living, it either *knows* it has a father, or does not: it does not "believe" it has a father. We should be surprised to see an intelligent child standing at its garden gate, crying out to the passers-by: "I believe in my father, because he built this house;" as logical people proclaim that they believe in God, because He must have made the world.

Evangelicals despised the arts, while the Roman Catholics were effete or insincere, and could not retain influence over men of strong reasoning power.

The painters could only associate frankly with men of the world, and themselves became men of the world. Men, I mean, having no belief in spiritual existences; no interests or affections beyond the grave.

§ 5. Not but that they still painted scriptural subjects. Altar-pieces were wanted occasionally, and pious patrons sometimes commissioned a cabinet Madonna. But there is just this difference between the men of this modern period, and the Florentines or Venetians—that whereas the latter never exert themselves fully except on a sacred subject, the Flemish and Dutch masters are always languid unless they are profane. Leonardo is only to be seen in the Cena; Titian only in the Assumption; but Rubens only in the Battle of the Amazons, and Vandyck only at court.

§ 6. Altar-pieces, when wanted, of course either of them will supply as readily as anything else. Virgins in blue,* or St. Johns in red,† as many as you please. Martyrdoms also, by all means: Rubens especially delights in these. St. Peter, head downwards,‡ is interesting anatomically; writhings of impenitent thieves, and bishops having their tongues pulled out, display our powers to advantage, also.§ Theological instruction, if required: "Christ armed with thunder, to destroy the world, spares it at the intercession of St. Francis."‖ Last Judgments even, quite Michael-Angelesque, rich in twistings of limbs, with spiteful biting, and scratching; and fine aërial effects in smoke of the pit.¶

§ 7. In all this, however, there is not a vestige of religious feeling or reverence. We have even some visible difficulty in meeting our patron's pious wishes. Daniel

* Dusseldorf. † Antwerp. ‡ Cologne.
§ Brussels. ‖ Brussels. ¶ Munich.

in the lion's den is indeed an available subject, but duller than a lion hunt; and, Mary of Nazareth must be painted, if an order come for her; but (says polite Sir Peter), Mary of Medicis, or Catherine, her bodice being fuller, and better embroidered, would, if we might offer a suggestion, probably give greater satisfaction.

§ 8. No phenomenon in human mind is more extraordinary than the junction of this cold and wordly temper with great rectitude of principle, and tranquil kindness of heart. Rubens was an honorable and entirely well-intentioned man, earnestly industrious, simple and temperate in habits of life, high-bred, learned, and discreet. His affection for his mother was great; his generosity to contemporary artists unfailing. He is a healthy, worthy, kind-hearted, courtly-phrased—Animal—without any clearly perceptible traces of a soul, except when he paints his children. Few descriptions of pictures could be more ludicrous in their pure animalism than those which he gives of his own. "It is a subject," he writes to Sir D. Carleton, "neither sacred nor profane, although taken from Holy Writ, namely, Sarah in the act of scolding Hagar, who, pregnant, is leaving the house in a feminine and graceful manner, assisted by the patriarch Abram." (What a graceful apology, by the way, instantly follows, for not having finished the picture himself.) "I have engaged, as is my custom, a very skilful man in his pursuit to finish the landscapes solely to augment the enjoyment of Y. E.!" *

Again, in priced catalogue,—

"50 florins each.—The Twelve Apostles, with a Christ. Done by my scholars, from originals by my own hand, each having to be retouched by my hand throughout.

"600 florins.—A picture of Achilles clothed as a

* Original Papers Relating to Rubens; edited by W. Sainsbury. London, 1859: page 39. Y. E. is the person who commissioned the picture.

woman; done by the best of my scholars, and the whole retouched by my hand; a most brilliant picture, and full of many beautiful young girls."

§ 9. Observe, however, Rubens is always entirely honorable in his statements of what is done by himself and what not. He is religious, too, after his manner; hears mass every morning, and perpetually uses the phrase "by the grace of God," or some other such, in writing of any business he takes in hand; but the tone of his religion may be determined by one fact.

We saw how Veronese painted himself and his family, as worshipping the Madonna.

Rubens has also painted himself and his family in an equally elaborate piece. But they are not *worshipping* the Madonna. They are *performing* the Madonna, and her saintly entourage. His favorite wife "En Madone;" his youngest boy "as Christ;" his father-in-law (or father, it matters not which) as "Simeon;" another elderly relation, with a beard, "as St. Jerome;" and he himself "as St. George."

§ 10. Rembrandt has also painted (it is, on the whole, his greatest picture, so far as I have seen) himself and his wife in a state of ideal happiness. He sits at supper with his wife on his knee, flourishing a glass of champagne, with a roast peacock on the table.

The Rubens is in the Church of St. James at Antwerp; the Rembrandt at Dresden—marvellous pictures, both. No more precious works by either painter exist. Their hearts, such as they have, are entirely in them; and the two pictures, not inaptly, represent the Faith and Hope of the 17th century. We have to stoop somewhat lower, in order to comprehend the pastoral and rustic scenery of Cuyp and Teniers, which must yet be held as forming one group with the historical art of Rubens, being connected with it by Rubens' pastoral landscape. To these, I say, we must stoop lower; for they are desti-

tute, not of spiritual character only, but of spiritual thought.

Rubens often gives instructive and magnificent allegory; Rembrandt, pathetic or powerful fancies, founded on real scripture reading, and on his interest in the picturesque character of the Jew. And Vandyck, a graceful dramatic rendering of received scriptural legends.

But in the pastoral landscape we lose, not only all faith in religion, but all remembrance of it. Absolutely now at last we find ourselves without sight of God in all the world.

§ 11. So far as I can hear or read, this is an entirely new and wonderful state of things achieved by the Hollanders. The human being never got wholly quit of the terror of spiritual being before. Persian, Egyptian, Assyrian, Hindoo, Chinese, all kept some dim, appalling record of what they called "gods." Farthest savages had—and still have—their Great Spirit, or, in extremity, their feather idols, large-eyed; but here in Holland we have at last got utterly done with it all. Our only idol glitters dimly, in tangible shape of a pint pot, and all the incense offered thereto, comes out of a small censer or bowl at the end of a pipe. Of deities or virtues, angels, principalities, or powers, in the name of our ditches, no more. Let us have cattle, and market vegetables.

This is the first and essential character of the Holland landscape art. Its second is a worthier one; respect for rural life.

§ 12. I should attach greater importance to this rural feeling, if there were any true humanity in it, or any feeling for beauty. But there is neither. No incidents of this lower life are painted for the sake of the incidents, but only for the effects of light. You will find that the best Dutch painters do not care about the

people, but about the lustres on them. Paul Potter, their best herd and cattle painter, does not care even for sheep, but only for wool; regards not cows, but cowhide. He attains great dexterity in drawing tufts and locks, lingers in the little parallel ravines and furrows of fleece that open across sheeps' backs as they turn; is unsurpassed in twisting a horn or pointing a nose; but he cannot paint eyes, nor perceive any condition of an animal's mind, except its desire of grazing. Cuyp can, indeed, paint sunlight, the best that Holland's sun can show; he is a man of large natural gift, and sees broadly, nay, even seriously; finds out—a wonderful thing for men to find out in those days—that there are reflections in water, and that boats require often to be painted upside down. A brewer by trade, he feels the quiet of a summer afternoon, and his work will make you marvellously drowsy. It is good for nothing else that I know of: strong; but unhelpful and unthoughtful. Nothing happens in his pictures, except some indifferent person's asking the way of somebody else, who, by their cast of countenance, seems not likely to know it. For farther entertainment perhaps a red cow and a white one; or puppies at play, not playfully; the man's heart not going even with the puppies. Essentially he sees nothing but the shine on the flaps of their ears.

§ 13. Observe always, the fault lies not in the thing's being little, or the incident being slight. Titian could have put issues of life and death into the face of a man asking the way; nay, into the back of him, if he had so chosen. He has put a whole scheme of dogmatic theology into a row of bishops' backs at the Louvre. And for dogs, Velasquez has made some of them nearly as grand as his surly kings.

Into the causes of which grandeur we must look a little, with respect not only to these puppies, and gray horses, and cattle of Cuyp, but to the hunting pieces of

Rubens and Snyders. For closely connected with the Dutch rejection of motives of spiritual interest, is the increasing importance attached by them to animals, seen either in the chase or in agriculture; and to judge justly of the value of this animal painting it will be necessary for us to glance at that of earlier times.

§ 14. And first of the animals which have had more influence over the human soul, in its modern life, than ever Apis or the crocodile had over Egyptian—the dog and horse. I stated, in speaking of Venetian religion, that the Venetians always introduced the dog as a contrast to the high aspects of humanity. They do this, not because they consider him the basest of animals, but the highest—the connecting link between men and animals; in whom the lower forms of really human feeling may be best exemplified, such as conceit, gluttony, indolence, petulance. But they saw the noble qualities of the dog, too;—all his patience, love, and faithfulness; therefore Veronese, hard as he is often on lap-dogs, has painted one great heroic poem on the dog.

§ 15. Two mighty brindled mastiffs, and beyond them, darkness. You scarcely see them at first, against the gloomy green. No other sky for them, poor things. They are gray themselves, spotted with black all over; their multitudinous doggish vices may not be washed out of them,—are in grain of nature. Strong thewed and sinewed, however,—no blame on them as far as bodily strength may reach; their heads coal-black, with drooping ears and fierce eyes, bloodshot a little. Wildest of beasts perhaps they would have been, by nature. But between them stands the spirit of their human Love, dove-winged and beautiful, the resistless Greek boy, golden-quivered; his glowing breast and limbs the only light upon the sky,—purple and pure. He has cast his chain about the dogs' necks, and holds it in his strong

right hand, leaning proudly a little back from them. They will never break loose.

§ 16. This is Veronese's highest, or spiritual view of the dog's nature. He can only give this when looking at the creature alone. When he sees it in company with men, he subdues it, like an inferior light in presence of the sky; and generally then gives it a merely brutal nature, not insisting even on its affection. It is thus used in the Marriage in Cana to symbolize gluttony. That great picture I have not yet had time to examine in all its bearings of thought; but the chief purpose of it is, I believe, to express the pomp and pleasure of the world, pursued without thought of the presence of Christ; therefore the Fool with the bells is put in the centre, immediately underneath the Christ; and in front are the couple of dogs in leash, one gnawing a bone. A cat lying on her back scratches at one of the vases which hold the wine of the miracle.

§ 17. In the picture of Susannah, her little pet dog is merely doing his duty, barking at the Elders. But in that of the Magdalen (at Turin) a noble piece of bye-meaning is brought out by a dog's help. On one side is the principal figure, the Mary washing Christ's feet; on the other, a dog has just come out from beneath the table (the dog under the table eating of the crumbs), and in doing so, has touched the robe of one of the Pharisees, thus making it unclean. The Pharisee gathers up his robe in a passion, and shows the hem of it to a bystander, pointing to the dog at the same time.

§ 18. In the Supper at Emmaus, the dog's affection is, however, fully dwelt upon. Veronese's own two little daughters are playing, on the hither side of the table, with a great wolf-hound, larger than either of them. One with her head down, nearly touching his nose, is talking to him,—asking him questions it seems, nearly pushing him over at the same time:—the other, raising

her eyes, half archly, half dreamily,—some far-away thought coming over her,—leans against him on the other side, propping him with her little hand, laid slightly on his neck. He, all passive, and glad at heart, yielding himself to the pushing or sustaining hand, looks earnestly into the face of the child close to his; would answer her with the gravity of a senator, if so it might be:—can only look at her, and love her.

§ 19. To Velasquez and Titian dogs seem less interesting than to Veronese; they paint them simply as noble brown beasts, but without any special character; perhaps Velasquez's dogs are sterner and more threatening than the Venetian's, as are also his kings and admirals. This fierceness in the animal increases, as the spiritual power of the artist declines; and, with the fierceness, another character. One great and infallible sign of the absence of spiritual power is the presence of the slightest taint of obscenity. Dante marked this strongly in all his representations of demons, and as we pass from the Venetians and Florentines to the Dutch, the passing away of the soul-power is indicated by every animal becoming savage or foul. The dog is used by Teniers, and many other Hollanders, merely to obtain unclean jest; while by the more powerful men, Rubens, Snyders, Rembrandt, it is painted only in savage chase, or butchered agony. I know no pictures more shameful to humanity than the boar and lion hunts of Rubens and Snyders, signs of disgrace all the deeper, because the powers desecrated are so great. The painter of the village alehouse sign may, not dishonorably, paint the fox-hunt for the village squire; but the occupation of magnificent art-power in giving semblance of perpetuity to those bodily pangs which Nature has mercifully ordained to be transient, and in forcing us, by the fascination of its stormy skill, to dwell on that from which eyes of merciful men should instinctively turn away, and eyes of high-minded men

scornfully, is dishonorable, alike in the power which it degrades, and the joy to which it betrays.

§ 20. In our modern treatment of the dog, of which the prevailing tendency is marked by Landseer, the interest taken in him is disproportionate to that taken in man, and leads to a somewhat trivial mingling of sentiment, or warping by caricature; giving up the true nature of the animal for the sake of a pretty thought or pleasant jest. Neither Titian nor Velasquez ever jest; and though Veronese jests gracefully and tenderly, he never for an instant oversteps the absolute facts of nature. But the English painter looks for sentiment or jest primarily, and reaches both by a feebly romantic taint of fallacy, except in one or two simple and touching pictures, such as the Shepherd's Chief Mourner.

I was pleased by a little unpretending modern German picture at Dusseldorf, by E. Bosch, representing a boy carving a model of his sheep-dog in wood; the dog sitting on its haunches in front of him, watches the progress of the sculpture with a grave interest and curiosity, not in the least caricatured, but highly humorous. Another small picture, by the same artist, of a forester's boy being taught to shoot by his father, —the dog critically and eagerly watching the raising of the gun,—shows equally true sympathy.

§ 21. I wish I were able to trace any of the leading circumstances in the ancient treatment of the horse, but I have no sufficient data. Its function in the art of the Greeks is connected with all their beautiful fable philosophy; but I have not a tithe of the knowledge necessary to pursue the subject in this direction. It branches into questions relating to sacred animals, and Egyptian and eastern mythology. I believe the Greek interest in *pure* animal character corresponded closely to our own, except that it is less sentimental, and either distinctly true or distinctly fabulous; not hesitating be-

tween truth and falsehood. Achilles' horses, like Anacreon's dove, and Aristophanes' frogs and birds, speak clearly out, if at all. They do not become feebly human, by fallacies and exaggerations, but frankly and wholly.

Zeuxis' picture of the Centaur indicates, however, a more distinctly sentimental conception; and I suppose the Greek artists always to have fully appreciated the horse's fineness of temper and nervous constitution.* They seem, by the way, hardly to have done justice to the dog. My pleasure in the entire Odyssey is diminished because Ulysses gives not a word of kindness or of regret to Argus.

§ 22. I am still less able to speak of Roman treatment of the horse. It is very strange that in the chivalric ages, he is despised; their greatest painters drawing him with ludicrous neglect. The Venetians, as was natural, painted him little and ill; but he becomes important in the equestrian statues of the fifteenth and sixteenth century, chiefly, I suppose, under the influence of Leonardo.

I am not qualified to judge of the merit of these equestrian statues; but, in painting, I find that no real interest is taken in the horse until Vandyck's time, he and Rubens doing more for it than all previous painters put together. Rubens was a good rider, and rode nearly every day, as, I doubt not, Vandyck also. Some notice of an interesting equestrian picture of Vandyck's will be found in the next chapter. The horse has never, I think, been painted worthily again, since he died.† Of the influence of its unworthy painting, and unworthy

* "A single harsh word will raise a nervous horse's pulse ten beats a minute."—Mr. Rarey.

† John Lewis has made grand sketches of the horse, but has never, so far as I know, completed any of them. Respecting his wonderful engravings of wild animals, see my pamphlet on Pre-Raphaelitism.

use, I do not at present care to speak, noticing only that it brought about in England the last degradations of feeling and of art. The Dutch, indeed, banished all deity from the earth; but I think only in England has death-bed consolation been sought in a fox's tail.*

I wish, however, the reader distinctly to understand that the expressions of reprobation of field-sports which he will find scattered through these volumes,—and which, in concluding them, I wish I had time to collect and farther enforce—refer only to the chase and the turf; that is to say, to hunting, shooting, and horse-racing, but not to athletic exercises. I have just as deep a respect for boxing, wrestling, cricketing, and rowing, as contempt of all the various modes of wasting wealth, time, land, and energy of soul, which have been invented by the pride and selfishness of men, in order to enable them to be healthy in uselessness, and get quit of the burdens of their own lives, without condescending to make them serviceable to others.

§ 23. Lastly, of cattle.

The period when the interest of men began to be transferred from the ploughman to his oxen is very distinctly marked by Bassano. In him the descent is even greater, being, accurately, from the Madonna to the Manger—one of perhaps his best pictures (now, I believe, somewhere in the north of England), representing an adoration of shepherds with nothing to adore, they and their herds forming the subject, and the Christ being "supposed" at the side. From that time cattle-pieces become frequent, and gradually form a staple art commodity. Cuyp's are the best; nevertheless, neither by him nor any one else have I ever seen an entirely well-painted cow. All the men who have skill enough to paint cattle nobly, disdain them. The real influence of these Dutch cattle-pieces, in subsequent art, is difficult to trace, and is

* See "The Fox-hunter's Death-bed," a popular sporting print.

not worth tracing. They contain a certain healthy appreciation of simple pleasure which I cannot look upon wholly without respect. On the other hand, their cheap tricks of composition degraded the entire technical system of landscape; and their clownish and blunt vulgarities too long blinded us, and continue, so far as in them lies, to blind us yet, to all the true refinement and passion of rural life. There have always been truth and depth of pastoral feeling in the works of great poets and novelists; but never, I think, in painting, until lately. The designs of J. C. Hook are, perhaps, the only works of the kind in existence which deserve to be mentioned in connection with the pastorals of Wordsworth and Tennyson.

We must not, however, yet pass to the modern school, having still to examine the last phase of Dutch design, in which the vulgarities which might be forgiven to the truth of Cuyp, and forgotten in the power of Rubens, became unpardonable and dominant in the works of men who were at once affected and feeble. But before doing this, we must pause to settle a preliminary question, which is an important and difficult one, and will need a separate chapter; namely, What is vulgarity itself?

CHAPTER VII.

OF VULGARITY.

§ 1. Two great errors, coloring, or rather discoloring, severally, the minds of the higher and lower classes, have sown wide dissension, and wider misfortune, through the society of modern days. These errors are in our modes of interpreting the word "gentleman."

Its primal, literal, and perpetual meaning is "a man of pure race;" well bred, in the sense that a horse or dog is well bred.

The so-called higher classes, being generally of purer race than the lower, have retained the true idea, and the convictions associated with it; but are afraid to speak it out, and equivocate about it in public; this equivocation mainly proceeding from their desire to connect another meaning with it, and a false one;—that of "a man living in idleness on other people's labor;"—with which idea, the term has nothing whatever to do.

The lower classes, denying vigorously, and with reason, the notion that a gentleman means an idler, and rightly feeling that the more any one works, the more of a gentleman he becomes, and is likely to become,—have nevertheless got little of the good they otherwise might, from the truth, because, with it, they wanted to hold a falsehood,—namely, that race was of no consequence. It being precisely of as much consequence in man as it is in any other animal.

§ 2. The nation cannot truly prosper till both these

errors are finally got quit of. Gentlemen have to learn that it is no part of their duty or privilege to live on other people's toil. They have to learn that there is no degradation in the hardest manual, or the humblest servile, labor, when it is honest. But that there *is* degradation, and that deep, in extravagance, in bribery, in indolence, in pride, in taking places they are not fit for, or in coining places for which there is no need. It does not disgrace a gentleman to become an errand boy, or a day laborer; but it disgraces him much to become a knave, or a thief. And knavery is not the less knavery because it involves large interests, nor theft the less theft because it is countenanced by usage, or accompanied by failure in undertaken duty. It is an incomparably less guilty form of robbery to cut a purse out of a man's pocket, than to take it out of his hand on the understanding that you are to steer his ship up channel, when you do not know the soundings.

§ 3. On the other hand, the lower orders, and all orders, have to learn that every vicious habit and chronic disease communicates itself by descent; and that by purity of birth the entire system of the human body and soul may be gradually elevated, or by recklessness of birth, degraded; until there shall be as much difference between the well-bred and ill-bred human creature (whatever pains be taken with their education) as between a wolf-hound and the vilest mongrel cur. And the knowledge of this great fact ought to regulate the education of our youth, and the entire conduct of the nation.*

* We ought always in pure English to use the term "good breeding" literally; and to say "good nurture" for what we usually mean by good breeding. Given the race and make of the animal, you may turn it to good or bad account; you may spoil your good dog or colt, and make him as vicious as you choose, or break his back at once by ill usage; and you may, on the other hand, make something serviceable and respectable out of your poor cur or colt if you educate them carefully; but ill-bred they will both of them be to their lives' end;

§ 4. Gentlemanliness, however, in ordinary parlance, must be taken to signify those qualities which are usually the evidence of high breeding, and which, so far as they can be acquired, it should be every man's effort to acquire; or, if he has them by nature, to preserve and exalt. Vulgarity, on the other hand, will signify qualities usually characteristic of ill-breeding, which, according to his power, it becomes every person's duty to subdue. We have briefly to note what these are.

§ 5. A gentleman's first characteristic is that fineness of structure in the body, which renders it capable of the most delicate sensation; and of structure in the mind which renders it capable of the most delicate sympathies —one may say, simply, "fineness of nature." This is, of course, compatible with heroic bodily strength and mental firmness; in fact, heroic strength is not conceivable without such delicacy. Elephantine strength may drive its way through a forest and feel no touch of the boughs; but the white skin of Homer's Atrides would have felt a bent rose-leaf, yet subdue its feeling in glow of battle, and behave itself like iron. I do not mean to call an elephant a vulgar animal; but if you think about him carefully, you will find that his non-vulgarity consists in such gentleness as is possible to elephantine nature;

and the best you will ever be able to say of them is, that they are useful, and decently behaved ill-bred creatures. An error, which is associated with the truth, and which makes it always look weak and disputable, is the confusion of race with name; and the supposition that the blood of a family must still be good, if its genealogy be unbroken and its name not lost, though sire and son have been indulging age after age in habits involving perpetual degeneracy of race. Of course it is equally an error to suppose that, because a man's name is common, his blood must be base; since his family may have been ennobling it by pureness of moral habit for many generations, and yet may not have got any title, or other sign of nobleness attached to their names. Nevertheless, the probability is always in favor of the race which has had acknowledged supremacy, and in which every motive leads to the endeavor to preserve their true nobility.

not in his insensitive hide, nor in his clumsy foot; but in the way he will lift his foot if a child lies in his way; and in his sensitive trunk, and still more sensitive mind, and capability of pique on points of honor.

§ 6. And, though rightness of moral conduct is ultimately the great purifier of race, the sign of nobleness is not in this rightness of moral conduct, but in sensitiveness. When the make of the creature is fine, its temptations are strong, as well as its perceptions; it is liable to all kinds of impressions from without in their most violent form; liable therefore to be abused and hurt by all kinds of rough things which would do a coarser creature little harm, and thus to fall into frightful wrong if its fate will have it so. Thus David, coming of gentlest as well as royalest race, of Ruth as well as of Judah, is sensitiveness through all flesh and spirit; not that his compassion will restrain him from murder when his terror urges him to it; nay, he is driven to the murder all the more by his sensitiveness to the shame which otherwise threatens him. But when his own story is told him under a disguise, though only a lamb is now concerned, his passion about it leaves him no time for thought. "The man shall die,"—note the reason—"because he had no pity." He is so eager and indignant that it never occurs to him as strange that Nathan hides the name. This is true gentleman. A vulgar man would assuredly have been cautious, and asked, "who it was?"

§ 7. Hence it will follow that one of the probable signs of high-breeding in men generally, will be their kindness and mercifulness; these always indicating more or less fineness of make in the mind; and miserliness and cruelty the contrary; hence that of Isaiah: "The vile person shall no more be called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful." But a thousand things may prevent this kindness from displaying or continuing itself; the

mind of the man may be warped so as to bear mainly on his own interests, and then all his sensibilities will take the form of pride, or fastidiousness, or revengefulness; and other wicked, but not ungentlemanly tempers; or, farther, they may run into utter sensuality and covetousness, if he is bent on pleasure, accompanied with quite infinite cruelty when the pride is wounded, or the passions thwarted;—until your gentleman becomes Ezzelin, and your lady, the deadly Lucrece; yet still gentleman and lady, quite incapable of making anything else of themselves, being so born.

§ 8. A truer sign of breeding than mere kindness is therefore sympathy; a vulgar man may often be kind in a hard way, on principle, and because he thinks he ought to be; whereas, a highly-bred man, even when cruel, will be cruel in a softer way, understanding and feeling what he inflicts, and pitying his victim. Only we must carefully remember that the quantity of sympathy a gentleman feels can never be judged of by its outward expression, for another of his chief characteristics is apparent reserve. I say "apparent" reserve; for the sympathy is real, but the reserve not: a perfect gentleman is never reserved, but sweetly and entirely open, so far as it is good for others, or possible, that he should be. In a great many respects it is impossible that he should be open except to men of his own kind. To them, he can open himself, by a word, or syllable, or a glance; but to men not of his kind he cannot open himself, though he tried it through an eternity of clear grammatical speech. By the very acuteness of his sympathy he knows how much of himself he can give to anybody; and he gives that much frankly;—would always be glad to give more if he could, but is obliged, nevertheless, in his general intercourse with the world, to be a somewhat silent person; silence is to most people, he finds, less reserved than speech. Whatever

he said, a vulgar man would misinterpret: no words that he could use would bear the same sense to the vulgar man that they do to him; if he used any, the vulgar man would go away saying, "He had said so and so, and meant so and so" (something assuredly he never meant); but he keeps silence, and the vulgar man goes away saying, "He didn't know what to make of him." Which is precisely the fact, and the only fact which he is anywise able to announce to the vulgar man concerning himself.

§ 9. There is yet another quite as efficient cause of the apparent reserve of a gentleman. His sensibility being constant and intelligent, it will be seldom that a feeling touches him, however acutely, but it has touched him in the same way often before, and in some sort is touching him always. It is not that he feels little, but that he feels habitually; a vulgar man having some heart at the bottom of him, if you can by talk or by sight fairly force the pathos of anything down to his heart, will be excited about it and demonstrative; the sensation of pity being strange to him, and wonderful. But your gentleman has walked in pity all day long; the tears have never been out of his eyes: you thought the eyes were bright only; but they were wet. You tell him a sorrowful story, and his countenance does not change; the eyes can but be wet still; he does not speak neither, there being, in fact, nothing to be said, only something to be done; some vulgar person, beside you both, goes away saying, "How hard he is!" Next day he hears that the hard person has put good end to the sorrow he said nothing about;—and then he changes his wonder, and exclaims, "How reserved he is!"

§ 10. Self-command is often thought a characteristic of high-breeding: and to a certain extent it is so, at least it is one of the means of forming and strengthening character; but it is rather a way of imitating a gentleman than a characteristic of him; a true gentleman has

no need of self-command; he simply feels rightly on all occasions: and desiring to express only so much of his feeling as it is right to express, does not need to command himself. Hence perfect ease is indeed characteristic of him; but perfect ease is inconsistent with self-restraint. Nevertheless gentlemen, so far as they fail of their own ideal, need to command themselves, and do so; while, on the contrary, to feel unwisely, and to be unable to restrain the expression of the unwise feeling, is vulgarity; and yet even then, the vulgarity, at its root, is not in the mistimed expression, but in the unseemly feeling; and when we find fault with a vulgar person for "exposing himself," it is not his openness, but clumsiness; and yet more the want of sensibility to his own failure, which we blame; so that still the vulgarity resolves itself into want of sensibility. Also, it is to be noted that great powers of self-restraint may be attained by very vulgar persons, when it suits their purposes.

§ 11. Closely, but strangely, connected with this openness is that form of truthfulness which is opposed to cunning, yet not opposed to falsity absolute. And herein is a distinction of great importance.

Cunning signifies especially a habit or gift of overreaching, accompanied with enjoyment and a sense of superiority. It is associated with small and dull conceit, and with an absolute want of sympathy or affection. Its essential connection with vulgarity may be at once exemplified by the expression of the butcher's dog in Landseer's "Low Life." Cruikshank's "Noah Claypole," in the illustrations to Oliver Twist, in the interview with the Jew, is, however, still more characteristic. It is the intensest rendering of vulgarity absolute and utter with which I am acquainted.*

* Among the reckless losses of the right service of intellectual power with which this century must be charged, very few are, to my mind, more to be regretted than that which is involved in its having

The truthfulness which is opposed to cunning ought, perhaps, rather to be called the desire of truthfulness; it consists more in unwillingness to deceive than in not deceiving,—an unwillingness implying sympathy with and respect for the person deceived; and a fond observance of truth up to the possible point, as in a good soldier's mode of retaining his honor through a *ruse-de-guerre*. A cunning person seeks for opportunities to deceive; a gentleman shuns them. A cunning person triumphs in deceiving; a gentleman is humiliated by his success, or at least by so much of the success as is dependent merely on the falsehood, and not on his intellectual superiority.

§ 12. The absolute disdain of all lying belongs rather to Christian chivalry than to mere high breeding; as connected merely with this latter, and with general refinement and courage, the exact relations of truthfulness may be best studied in the well-trained Greek mind. The Greeks believed that mercy and truth were co-relative virtues — cruelty and falsehood co-relative vices. But they did not call necessary severity, cruelty; nor necessary deception, falsehood. It was needful sometimes to slay men, and sometimes to deceive them. When this had to be done, it should be done well and thoroughly; so that to direct a spear well to its mark, or a lie well to its end, was equally the accomplishment of a perfect gentleman. Hence, in the pretty diamond-cut-diamond scene between Pallas and Ulysses, when she receives him on the coast of Ithaca, the goddess laughs delightedly at her hero's good lying, and gives him her hand upon it; showing herself then in her woman's form, as just a little more than his match.

turned to no higher purpose than the illustration of the career of Jack Sheppard, and of the Irish Rebellion, the great, grave (I use the words deliberately and with large meaning), and singular genius of Cruikshank.

"Subtle would he be, and stealthy, who should go beyond thee in deceit, even were he a god, thou many-witted! What! here in thine own land, too, wilt thou not cease from cheating? Knowest thou not me, Pallas Athena, maid of Jove, who am with thee in all thy labors, and gave thee favor with the Phæacians, and keep thee, and have come now to weave cunning with thee?" But how completely this kind of cunning was looked upon as a part of a man's power, and not as a diminution of faithfulness, is perhaps best shown by the single line of praise in which the high qualities of his servant are summed up by Chremulus in the Plutus — "Of all my house servants, I hold you to be the faithfullest, and the greatest cheat (or thief)."

§ 13. Thus, the primal difference between honorable and base lying in the Greek mind lay in honorable purpose. A man who used his strength wantonly to hurt others, was a monster; so, also, a man who used his cunning wantonly to hurt others. Strength and cunning were to be used only in self-defence, or to save the weak, and then were alike admirable. This was their first idea. Then the second, and perhaps the more essential, difference between noble and ignoble lying in the Greek mind, was that the honorable lie—or, if we may use the strange, yet just, expression, the true lie—knew and confessed itself for such—was ready to take the full responsibility of what it did. As the sword answered for its blow, so the lie for its snare. But what the Greeks hated with all their heart was the false lie; the lie that did not know itself, feared to confess itself, which slunk to its aim under a cloak of truth, and sought to do liars' work, and yet not take liars' pay, excusing itself to the conscience by quibble and quirk. Hence the great expression of Jesuit principle by Euripides, "The tongue has sworn, but not the

heart," was a subject of execration throughout Greece, and the satirists exhausted their arrows on it—no audience was ever tired hearing (τὸ Εὐριπιδειον ἐκεῖνο) "that Euripidean thing" brought to shame.

§ 14. And this is especially to be insisted on in the early education of young people. It should be pointed out to them with continual earnestness that the essence of lying is in deception, not in words; a lie may be told by silence, by equivocation, by the accent on a syllable, by a glance of the eye attaching a peculiar significance to a sentence; and all these kinds of lies are worse and baser by many degrees than a lie plainly worded; so that no form of blinded conscience is so far sunk as that which comforts itself for having deceived, because the deception was by gesture or silence, instead of utterance; and, finally, according to Tennyson's deep and trenchant line, "A lie which is half a truth is ever the worst of lies."

§ 15. Although, however, ungenerous cunning is usually so distinct an outward manifestation of vulgarity, that I name it separately from insensibility, it is in truth only an effect of insensibility, producing want of affection to others, and blindness to the beauty of truth. The degree in which political subtlety in men such as Richelieu, Machiavel, or Metternich, will efface the gentleman, depends on the selfishness of political purpose to which the cunning is directed, and on the base delight taken in its use. The command, "Be ye wise as serpents, harmless as doves," is the ultimate expression of this principle, misunderstood usually because the word "wise" is referred to the intellectual power instead of the subtlety of the serpent. The serpent has very little intellectual power, but according to that which it has, it is yet, as of old, the subtlest of the beasts of the field.

§ 16. Another great sign of vulgarity is also, when

traced to its root, another phase of insensibility, namely, the undue regard to appearances and manners, as in the households of vulgar persons, of all stations, and the assumption of behavior, language, or dress unsuited to them, by persons in inferior stations of life. I say "undue" regard to appearances, because in the undueness consists, of course, the vulgarity. It is due and wise in some sort to care for appearances, in another sort undue and unwise. Wherein lies the difference?

At first one is apt to answer quickly: the vulgarity is simply in pretending to be what you are not. But that answer will not stand. A queen may dress like a waiting-maid,—perhaps succeed, if she chooses, in passing for one; but she will not, therefore, be vulgar; nay, a waiting-maid may dress like a queen, and pretend to be one, and yet need not be vulgar, unless there is inherent vulgarity in her. In Scribe's very absurd but very amusing *Reine d'un jour*, a milliner's girl sustains the part of a queen for a day. She several times amazes and disgusts her courtiers by her straightforwardness; and once or twice very nearly betrays herself to her maids of honor by an unqueenly knowledge of sewing; but she is not in the least vulgar, for she is sensitive, simple, and generous, and a queen could be no more.

§ 17. Is the vulgarity, then, only in trying to play a part you cannot play, so as to be continually detected? No; a bad amateur actor may be continually detected in his part, but yet continually detected to be a gentleman: a vulgar regard to appearances has nothing in it necessarily of hypocrisy. You shall know a man not to be a gentleman by the perfect and neat pronunciation of his words: but he does not pretend to pronounce accurately; he *does* pronounce accurately, and the vulgarity is in the real (not assumed) scrupulousness.

§ 18. It will be found on farther thought, that a vulgar regard for appearances is, primarily, a selfish one, resulting, not out of a wish to give pleasure (as a wife's wish to make herself beautiful for her husband), but out of an endeavor to mortify others, or attract for pride's sake;—the common "keeping up appearances" of society, being a mere selfish struggle of the vain with the vain. But the deepest stain of the vulgarity depends on this being done, not selfishly only, but stupidly, without understanding the impression which is really produced, nor the relations of importance between oneself and others, so as to suppose that their attention is fixed upon us, when we are in reality ciphers in their eyes—all which comes of insensibility. Hence pride simple is not vulgar (the looking down on others because of their true inferiority to us), nor vanity simple (the desire of praise), but conceit simple (the attribution to ourselves of qualities we have not), is always so. In cases of overstudied pronunciation, &c., there is insensibility, first, in the person's thinking more of himself than of what he is saying; and, secondly, in his not having musical fineness of ear enough to feel that his talking is uneasy and strained.

§ 19. Finally, vulgarity is indicated by coarseness of language or manners, only so far as this coarseness has been contracted under circumstances not necessarily producing it. The illiterateness of a Spanish or Calabrian peasant is not vulgar, because they had never an opportunity of acquiring letters; but the illiterateness of an English school-boy is. So again, provincial dialect is not vulgar; but cockney dialect, the corruption, by blunted sense, of a finer language continually heard, is so in a deep degree; and again, of this corrupted dialect, that is the worst which consists, not in the direct or expressive alteration of the form of a word, but in an unmusical destruction of it by dead utterance and

bad or swollen formation of lip. There is no vulgarity in—

> "Blythe, blythe, blythe was she,
> Blythe was she, but and ben,
> And weel she liked a Hawick gill,
> And leugh to see a tappit hen;"

but much in Mrs. Gamp's inarticulate "bottle on the chumley-piece, and let me put my lips to it when I am so dispoged."

§ 20. So also of personal defects, those only are vulgar which imply insensibility or dissipation.

There is no vulgarity in the emaciation of Don Quixote, the deformity of the Black Dwarf, or the corpulence of Falstaff; but much in the same personal characters, as they are seen in Uriah Heep, Quilp, and Chadband.

§ 21. One of the most curious minor questions in this matter is respecting the vulgarity of excessive neatness, complicating itself with inquiries into the distinction between base neatness, and the perfectness of good execution in the fine arts. It will be found on final thought that precision and exquisiteness of arrangement are always noble; but become vulgar only when they arise from an equality (insensibility) of temperament, which is incapable of fine passion, and is set ignobly, and with a dullard mechanism, on accuracy in vile things. In the finest Greek coins, the letters of the inscriptions are purposely coarse and rude, while the relievi are wrought with inestimable care. But in an English coin, the letters are the best done, and the whole is unredeemably vulgar. In a picture of Titian's, an inserted inscription will be complete in the lettering, as all the rest is; because it costs Titian very little more trouble to draw rightly than wrongly, and in him, therefore, impatience with the letters would be vulgar, as in the Greek sculp-

tor of the coin, patience would have been. For the engraving of a letter accurately * is difficult work, and his time must have been unworthily thrown away.

§ 22. All the different impressions connected with negligence or foulness depend, in like manner, on the degree of insensibility implied. Disorder in a drawing-room is vulgar, in an antiquary's study, not; the black battle-stain on a soldier's face is not vulgar, but the dirty face of a housemaid is.

* There is this farther reason also: "Letters are always ugly things" —(Seven Lamps, chap. iv. s. 9). Titian often wanted a certain quantity of ugliness to oppose his beauty with, as a certain quantity of black to oppose his color. He could regulate the size and quantity of inscription as he liked; and, therefore, made it as neat—that is, as effectively ugly—as possible. But the Greek sculptor could not regulate either size or quantity of inscription. Legible it must be, to common eyes, and contain an assigned group of words. He had more ugliness than he wanted, or could endure. There was nothing for it but to make the letters themselves rugged and picturesque; to give them—that is, a certain quantity of organic variety.

I do not wonder at people sometimes thinking I contradict myself when they come suddenly on any of the scattered passages, in which I am forced to insist on the opposite practical applications of subtle principles of this kind. It may amuse the reader, and be finally serviceable to him in showing him how necessary it is to the right handling of any subject, that those contrary statements should be made, if I assemble here the principal ones I remember having brought forward, bearing on this difficult point of precision in execution.

It would be well if you would first glance over the chapter on Finish in the third volume; and if, coming to the paragraph, about gentlemen's carriages, you have time to turn to Sydney Smith's Memoirs and read his account of the construction of the "Immortal," it will furnish you with an interesting illustration.

The general conclusion reached in that chapter being that finish, for the sake of added truth or utility, or beauty, is noble; but finish, for the sake of workmanship, neatness, or polish, ignoble—turn to the fourth chapter of the Seven Lamps, where you will find the Campanile of Giotto given as the model and mirror of perfect architecture, just on account of its exquisite completion. Also, in the next chapter, I expressly limit the delightfulness of rough and imperfect work to developing and unformed schools (pp. 142–3, 1st edi-

And lastly, courage, so far as it is a sign of race, is peculiarly the mark of a gentleman or a lady ; but it becomes vulgar if rude or insensitive, while timidity is not vulgar, if it be a characteristic of race or fineness of make. A fawn is not vulgar in being timid, nor a crocodile "gentle" because courageous.

§ 23. Without following the inquiry into farther de-

tion); then turn to the Stones of Venice, Vol. III., and you will find this directly contrary statement :—

"No good work whatever can be perfect, and the demand for perfection is always a sign of the misunderstanding of the end of art.". . .

"The first cause of the fall of the arts in Europe was a relentless requirement of perfection." By reading the intermediate text, you will be put in possession of many good reasons for this opinion ; and, comparing it with that just cited about the Campanile of Giotto, will be brought, I hope, into a wholesome state of not knowing what to think.

Then turn to § 19, where the great law of finish is again maintained as strongly as ever : "Perfect finish (finish, that is to say, up to the point possible) is always desirable from the greatest masters, and is always given by them."

And, lastly, if you look to § 19 of the chapter on the Early Renaissance, you will find the profoundest respect paid to completion ; and, at the close of that chapter, § 38, the principle is resumed very strongly. "As *ideals of executive perfection*, these palaces are most notable among the architecture of Europe, and the Rio façade of the Ducal palace, as an example of finished masonry in a vast building, is one of the finest things, not only in Venice, but in the world."

Now all these passages are perfectly true ; and, as in much more serious matters, the essential thing for the reader is to receive their truth, however little he may be able to see their consistency. If truths of apparent contrary character are candidly and rightly received, they will fit themselves together in the mind without any trouble. But no truth maliciously received will nourish you, or fit with others. The clue of connection may in this case, however, be given in a word. Absolute finish is always right ; finish, inconsistent with prudence and passion, wrong. The imperative demand for finish is ruinous, because it refuses better things than finish. The stopping short of the finish, which is honorably possible to human energy, is destructive on the other side, and not in less degree. Err, of the two, on the side of completion.

tail,* we may conclude that vulgarity consists in a deadness of the heart and body, resulting from prolonged, and especially from inherited conditions of "degeneracy," or literally "unracing;"—gentlemanliness, being another word for an intense humanity. And vulgarity shows itself primarily in dulness of heart, not in rage or

* In general illustration of the subject, the following extract from my private diary possesses some interest. It refers to two portraits which happened to be placed opposite to each other in the arrangement of a gallery; one, modern, of a (foreign) general on horseback at a review; the other, by Vandyck, also an equestrian portrait, of an ancestor of his family, whom I shall here simply call the "knight:"

"I have seldom seen so noble a Vandyck, chiefly because it is painted with less flightiness and flimsiness than usual, with a grand quietness and reserve—almost like Titian. The other is, on the contrary, as vulgar and base a picture as I have ever seen, and it becomes a matter of extreme interest to trace the cause of the difference.

"In the first place, everything the general and his horse wear is evidently just made. It has not only been cleaned that morning, but has been sent home from the tailor's in a hurry last night. Horse bridle, saddle housings, blue coat, stars and lace thereupon, cocked hat, and sword hilt—all look as if they had just been taken from a shopboard in Pall Mall; the irresistible sense of the coat having been brushed to perfection is the first sentiment which the picture summons. The horse has also been rubbed down all the morning, and shines from head to tail.

"The knight rides in a suit of rusty armor. It has evidently been polished also carefully, and gleams brightly here and there; but all the polishing in the world will never take the battle-dints and battle darkness out of it. His horse is gray, not lustrous, but a dark, lurid gray. Its mane is deep and soft: part of it shaken in front over its forehead—the rest, in enormous masses of waving gold, six feet long, falls streaming on its neck, and rises in currents of softest light, rippled by the wind, over the rider's armor. The saddle cloth is of a dim red, fading into leathern brown, gleaming with sparkles of obscure gold. When, after looking a little while at the soft mane of the Vandyck horse, we turn back to the general's, we are shocked by the evident coarseness of its hair, which hangs, indeed, in long locks over the bridle, but is stiff, crude, sharp pointed, coarsely colored (a kind of buff); no fine drawing of nostril or neck can give any look of nobleness to the animal which carries such hair; it looks like a hobby-horse with tow glued to it, which riotous children have half

cruelty, but in inability to feel or conceive noble character or emotion. This is its essential, pure, and most fatal form. Dulness of bodily sense and general stupidity, with such forms of crime as peculiarly issue from stupidity, are its material manifestation.

§ 24. Two years ago, when I was first beginning to

pulled out or scratched out. The next point of difference is the isolation of Vandyck's figure, compared with the modern painter's endeavor to ennoble his by subduing others. The knight seems to be just going out of his castle gates; his horse rears as he passes their pillars; there is nothing behind but the sky. But the general is reviewing a regiment; the ensign lowers its colors to him; he takes off his hat in return. All which reviewing and bowing is in its very nature ignoble, wholly unfit to be painted: a gentleman might as well be painted leaving his card on somebody. And, in the next place, the modern painter has thought to enhance his officer by putting the regiment some distance back, and in the shade, so that the men look only about five feet high, being besides very ill painted to keep them in better subordination. One does not know whether most to despise the feebleness of the painter who must have recourse to such an artifice, or his vulgarity in being satisfied with it. I ought, by the way, before leaving the point of dress, to have noted that the vulgarity of the painter is considerably assisted by the vulgarity of the costume itself. Not only is it base in being new, but base in that it cannot last to be old. If one wanted a lesson on the ugliness of modern costume, it could not be more sharply received than by turning from one to the other horseman. The knight wears steel plate armor, chased here and there with gold; the delicate, rich, pointed lace collar falling on the embossed breastplate; his dark hair flowing over his shoulders; a crimson silk scarf fastened round his waist, and floating behind him; buff boots, deep folded at the instep, set in silver stirrup. The general wears his hair cropped short; blue coat, padded and buttoned; blue trowsers and red stripe; black shiny boots; common saddler's stirrups; cocked hat in hand, suggestive of absurd completion, when assumed.

"Another thing noticeable as giving nobleness to the Vandyck is its femininenes: the rich, light silken scarf, the flowing hair, the delicate, sharp, though sunburnt features, and the lace collar, do not in the least diminish the manliness, but *add* femininenes. One sees that the knight is indeed a soldier, but not a soldier only; that he is accomplished in all ways, and tender in all thoughts: while the general is represented as nothing but a soldier—and it is very doubtful if

work out the subject, and chatting with one of my keenest-minded friends (Mr. Brett, the painter of the Val d'Aosta in the Exhibition of 1859), I casually asked him, "What is vulgarity?" merely to see what he would say, not supposing it possible to get a sudden answer. He thought for about a minute, then answered quietly, "It is merely one of the forms of Death." I did not see the meaning of the reply at the time; but on testing it, found that it met every phase of the difficulties con-

he is even that—one is sure, at a glance, that if he can do anything but put his hat off and on, and give words of command, the anything must, at all events, have something to do with the barracks; that there is no grace, no music, nor softness, nor learnedness, in the man's soul; that he is made up of forms and accoutrements.

"Lastly, the modern picture is as bad painting as it is wretched conceiving, and one is struck, in looking from it to Vandyck's, peculiarly by the fact that good work is always *enjoyed* work. There is not a touch of Vandyck's pencil but he seems to have revelled in—not grossly, but delicately—tasting the color in every touch as an epicure would wine. While the other goes on daub, daub, daub, like a bricklayer spreading mortar—nay, with far less lightness of hand or lightness of spirit than a good bricklayer's—covering his canvas heavily and conceitedly at once, caring only but to catch the public eye with his coarse, presumptuous, ponderous, illiterate work."

Thus far my diary. In case it should be discovered by any one where these pictures are, it should be noted that the vulgarity of the modern one is wholly the painter's fault. It implies none in the general (except bad taste in pictures). The same painter would have made an equally vulgar portrait of Bayard. And as for taste in pictures, the general's was not singular. I used to spend much time before the Vandyck; and among all the tourist visitors to the gallery, who were numerous, I never saw one look at it twice, but all paused in respectful admiration before the padded surtout. The reader will find, farther, many interesting and most valuable notes on the subject of nobleness and vulgarity in Emerson's Essays, and every phase of nobleness illustrated in Sir Kenelm Digby's "Broad Stone of Honor." The best help I have ever had—so far as help depended on the sympathy or praise of others in work which, year after year, it was necessary to pursue through the abuse of the brutal and the base—was given me, when this author, from whom I had first learned to love nobleness, introduced frequent reference to my own writings in his "Children's Bower."

nected with the inquiry, and summed the true conclusion. Yet, in order to be complete, it ought to be made a distinctive as well as conclusive definition; showing *what* form of death vulgarity is; for death itself is not vulgar, but only death mingled with life. I cannot, however, construct a short-worded definition which will include all the minor conditions of bodily degeneracy; but the term "deathful selfishness" will embrace all the most fatal and essential forms of mental vulgarity.

CHAPTER VIII.

WOUVERMANS AND ANGELICO.

§ 1. Having determined the general nature of vulgarity, we are now able to close our view of the character of the Dutch school.

It is a strangely mingled one, which I have the more difficulty in investigating, because I have no power of sympathy with it. However inferior in capacity, I can enter measuredly into the feelings of Correggio or of Titian; what they like, I like; what they disdain, I disdain. Going lower down, I can still follow Salvator's passion, or Albano's prettiness; and lower still, I can measure modern German heroics, or French sensualities. I see what the people mean—know where they are, and what they are. But no effort of fancy will enable me to lay hold of the temper of Teniers or Wouvermans, any more than I can enter into the feelings of one of the lower animals. I cannot see why they painted—what they are aiming at—what they liked or disliked. All their life and work is the same sort of mystery to me as the mind of my dog when he rolls on carrion. He is a well enough conducted dog in other respects, and many of these Dutchmen were doubtless very well-conducted persons: certainly they learned their business well; both Teniers and Wouvermans touch with a workmanly hand, such as we cannot see rivalled now; and they seem never to have painted indolently, but gave the purchaser his thorough money's worth of mechanism, while the bur-

gesses who bargained for their cattle and card parties were probably more respectable men than the princes who gave orders to Titian for nymphs, and to Raphael for nativities. But whatever patient merit or commercial value may be in Dutch labor, this at least is clear, that it is wholly insensitive.

The very mastery these men have of their business proceeds from their never really seeing the whole of anything, but only that part of it which they know how to do. Out of all nature they felt their function was to extract the grayness and shininess. Give them a golden sunset, a rosy dawn, a green waterfall, a scarlet autumn on the hills, and they merely look curiously into it to see if there is anything gray and glittering which can be painted on their common principles.

§ 2. If this, however, were their only fault, it would not prove absolute insensibility, any more than it could be declared of the makers of Florentine tables, that they were blind or vulgar because they took out of nature only what could be represented in agate. A Dutch picture is, in fact, merely a Florentine table more finely touched: it has its regular ground of slate, and its mother-of-pearl and tinsel put in with equal precision; and perhaps the fairest view one can take of a Dutch painter is, that he is a respectable tradesman furnishing well-made articles in oil paint: but when we begin to examine the designs of these articles, we may see immediately that it is his inbred vulgarity, and not the chance of fortune, which has made him a tradesman, and kept him one;—which essential character of Dutch work, as distinguished from all other, may be best seen in that hybrid landscape, introduced by Wouvermans and Berghem. Of this landscape Wouvermans' is the most characteristic. It will be remembered that I called it "hybrid," because it strove to unite the attractiveness of every other school. We will examine the motives of

one of the most elaborate Wouvermans existing — the landscape with a hunting party, No. 208 in the Pinacothek of Munich.

§ 3. A large lake in the distance narrows into a river in the foreground; but the river has no current, nor has the lake either reflections or waves. It is a piece of gray slate-table, painted with horizontal touches, and only explained to be water by boats upon it. Some of the figures in these are fishing (the corks of a net are drawn in bad perspective); others are bathing, one man pulling his shirt over his ears, others are swimming. On the farther side of the river are some curious buildings, half villa, half ruin; or rather ruin dressed. There are gardens at the top of them, with beautiful and graceful trellised architecture and wandering tendrils of vine. A gentleman is coming down from a door in the ruins to get into his pleasure-boat. His servant catches his dog.

§ 4. On the nearer side of the river, a bank of broken ground rises from the water's edge up to a group of very graceful and carefully studied trees, with a French-antique statue on a pedestal in the midst of them, at the foot of which are three musicians, and a well-dressed couple dancing; their coach is in waiting behind. In the foreground are hunters. A richly and highly-dressed woman, with falcon on fist, the principal figure in the picture, is wrought with Wouvermans' best skill. A stouter lady rides into the water after a stag and hind, who gallop across the middle of the river without sinking. Two horsemen attend the two Amazons, of whom one pursues the game cautiously, but the other is thrown headforemost into the river, with a splash which shows it to be deep at the edge, though the hart and hind find bottom in the middle. Running footmen, with other dogs, are coming up, and children are sailing a toy-boat in the immediate foreground. The tone of the whole is

dark and gray, throwing out the figures in spots of light, on Wouvermans' usual system. The sky is cloudy, and very cold.

§ 5. You observe that in this picture the painter has assembled all the elements which he supposes pleasurable. We have music, dancing, hunting, boating, fishing, bathing, and child-play, all at once. Water, wide and narrow; architecture, rustic and classical; trees also of the finest; clouds, not ill-shaped. Nothing wanting to our Paradise: not even practical jest; for to keep us always laughing, somebody shall be for ever falling with a splash into the Kishon. Things proceed, nevertheless, with an oppressive quietude. The dancers are uninterested in the hunters, the hunters in the dancers; the hirer of the pleasure-boat perceives neither hart nor hind; the children are unconcerned at the hunter's fall; the bathers regard not the draught of fishes; the fishers fish among the bathers, without apparently anticipating any diminution in their haul.

§ 6. Let the reader ask himself, would it have been possible for the painter in any clearer way to show an absolute, clay-cold, ice-cold incapacity of understanding what a pleasure meant? Had he had as much heart as a minnow, he would have given some interest to the fishing; with the soul of a grasshopper, some spring to the dancing; had he half the will of a dog, he would have made some one turn to look at the hunt, or given a little fire to the dash down to the water's edge. If he had been capable of pensiveness, he would not have put the pleasure-boat under the ruin; capable of cheerfulness, he would not have put the ruin above the pleasure-boat. Paralyzed in heart and brain, he delivers his inventoried articles of pleasure one by one to his ravenous customers; palateless; gluttonous. "We cannot taste it. Hunting is not enough; let us have dancing. That's dull; now give us a jest, or what is life! The river is

too narrow, let us have a lake; and, for mercy's sake, a pleasure-boat, or how can we spend another minute of this languid day! But what pleasure can be in a boat? let us swim; we see people always drest, let us see them naked."

§ 7. Such is the unredeemed, carnal appetite for mere sensual pleasure. I am aware of no other painter who consults it so exclusively, without one gleam of higher hope, thought, beauty, or passion.

As the pleasure of Wouvermans, so also is his war. That, however, is not hybrid, it is of one character only.

The best example I know is the great battle-piece with the bridge, in the gallery of Turin. It is said that when this picture, which had been taken to Paris, was sent back, the French offered twelve thousand pounds (300,000 francs) for permission to keep it. The report, true or not, shows the estimation in which the picture is held at Turin.

§ 8. There are some twenty figures in the mêlée whose faces can be seen (about sixty in the picture altogether), and of these twenty, there is not one whose face indicates courage or power; or anything but animal rage and cowardice; the latter prevailing always. Every one is fighting for his life, with the expression of a burglar defending himself at extremity against a party of policemen. There is the same terror, fury, and pain which a low thief would show on receiving a pistol-shot through his arm. Most of them appear to be fighting only to get away; the standard-bearer *is* retreating, but whether with the enemies flag or his own I do not see; he slinks away with it, with reverted eye, as if he were stealing a pocket-handkerchief. The swordsmen cut at each other with clenched teeth and terrified eyes; they are too busy to curse each other; but one sees that the feelings they have could be expressed no otherwise than

by low oaths. Far away, to the smallest figures in the smoke, and to one drowning under the distant arch of the bridge, all are wrought with a consummate skill in vulgar touch; there is no good painting, properly so called, anywhere, but of clever, dotty, sparkling, telling execution, as much as the canvas will hold, and much delicate gray and blue color in the smoke and sky.

§ 9. Now, in order fully to feel the difference between this view of war, and a gentleman's, go, if possible, into our National Gallery, and look at the young Malatesta riding into the battle of Sant' Egidio (as he is painted by Paul Ucello). His uncle Carlo, the leader of the army, a grave man of about sixty, has just given orders for the knights to close: two have pushed forward with lowered lances, and the mêlée has begun only a few yards in front; but the young knight, riding at his uncle's side, has not yet put his helmet on, nor intends doing so, yet. Erect he sits, and quiet, waiting for his captain's orders to charge; calm as if he were at a hawking party, only more grave; his golden hair wreathed about his proud white brow, as about a statue's.

§ 10. "Yes," the thoughtful reader replies; "this may be pictorially very beautiful; but those Dutchmen were good fighters, and generally won the day; whereas, this very battle of Sant' Egidio, so calmly and bravely begun, was lost."

Indeed, it is very singular that unmitigated expressions of cowardice in battle should be given by the painters of so brave a nation as the Dutch. Not but that it is possible enough for a coward to be stubborn, and a brave man weak; the one may win his battle by a blind persistence, and the other lose it by a thoughtful vacillation. Nevertheless, the want of all expression of resoluteness in Dutch battle-pieces remains, for the present, a mystery to me. In those of Wouvermans, it is only a

natural development of his perfect vulgarity in all respects.

§ 11. I do not think it necessary to trace farther the evidences of insensitive conception in the Dutch school. I have associated the name of Teniers with that of Wouvermans in the beginning of this chapter, because Teniers is essentially the painter of the pleasures of the ale-house and card-table, as Wouvermans of those of the chase; and the two are leading masters of the peculiar Dutch trick of white touch on gray or brown ground; but Teniers is higher in reach, and more honest in manner. Berghem is the real associate of Wouvermans in the hybrid school of landscape. But all three are alike insensitive; that is to say, unspiritual or deathful, and that to the uttermost, in every thought—producing, therefore, the lowest phase of possible art of a skilful kind. There are deeper elements in De Hooghe and Gerard Terburg; sometimes expressed with superb quiet painting by the former; but the whole school is inherently mortal to all its admirers; having by its influence in England destroyed our perception of all purposes of painting, and throughout the north of the Continent effaced the sense of color among artists of every rank.

We have, last, to consider what recovery has taken place from the paralysis to which the influence of this Dutch art had reduced us in England seventy years ago. But, in closing my review of older art, I will endeavor to illustrate, by four simple examples, the main directions of its spiritual power, and the cause of its decline.

§ 12. The frontispiece of this volume is engraved from an old sketch of mine, a pencil outline of the little Madonna by Angelico, in the Annunciation preserved in the sacristy of Santa Maria Novella. This Madonna has not, so far as I know, been engraved before, and it is one of the most characteristic of the Purist school. I believe through all my late work I have sufficiently guarded my

readers from over-estimating this school; but it is well to turn back to it now, from the wholly carnal work of Wouvermans, in order to feel its purity: so that, if we err, it may be on this side. The opposition is the most accurate which I can set before the student, for the technical disposition of Wouvermans, in his search after delicate form and minute grace, much resembles that of Angelico. But the thoughts of Wouvermans are wholly of this world. For him there is no heroism, awe, or mercy, hope, or faith. Eating and drinking, and slaying; rage and lust; the pleasures and distresses of the debased body—from these, his thoughts, if so we may call them, never for an instant rise or range.

§ 13. The soul of Angelico is in all ways the precise reverse of this; habitually as incognizant of any earthly pleasure as Wouvermans of any heavenly one. Both are exclusive with absolute exclusiveness;—neither desiring nor conceiving anything beyond their respective spheres. Wouvermans lives under gray clouds, his lights come out as spots. Angelico lives in an unclouded light: his shadows themselves are color; his lights are not the spots, but his darks. Wouvermans lives in perpetual tumult—tramp of horse—clash of cup—ring of pistol-shot. Angelico in perpetual peace. Not seclusion from the world. No shutting out of the world is needful for him. There is nothing to shut out. Envy, lust, contention, discourtesy, are to him as though they were not; and the cloister walk of Fiesole no penitential solitude, barred from the stir and joy of life, but a possessed land of tender blessing, guarded from the entrance of all but holiest sorrow. The little cell was as one of the houses of heaven prepared for him by his master. "What need had it to be elsewhere? Was not the Val d'Arno, with its olive woods in white blossom, paradise enough for a poor monk? or could Christ be indeed in heaven more than here? Was he not always with him? Could he

breathe or see, but that Christ breathed beside him and looked into his eyes? Under every cypress avenue the angels walked; he had seen their white robes, whiter than the dawn, at his bedside, as he awoke in early summer. They had sung with him, one on each side, when his voice failed for joy at sweet vesper and matin time; his eyes were blinded by their wings in the sunset, when it sank behind the hills of Luni."

There may be weakness in this, but there is no baseness; and while I rejoice in all recovery from monasticism which leads to practical and healthy action in the world, I must, in closing this work, severely guard my pupils from the thought that sacred rest may be honorably exchanged for selfish and mindless activity.

§ 14. In order to mark the temper of Angelico, by a contrast of another kind, I give, in Fig. 99, a facsimile of one of the heads in Salvator's etching of the Academy of Plato. It is accurately characteristic of Salvator, showing, by quite a central type, his indignant, desolate, and degraded power. I could have taken unspeakably baser examples from others of his etchings, but they would have polluted my book, and been in some sort unjust, representing only the worst part of his work. This head, which is as elevated a type as he ever reaches, is assuredly debased enough; and a sufficient image of the mind of the painter of Catiline and the Witch of Endor.

Fig. 99.

§ 15. Then, in Fig. 100, you have also a central type of the mind of Durer. Complete, yet quaint; severely rational and practical, yet capable of the highest imaginative religious feeling, and as gentle as a child's, it seemed to be well represented by this figure of the old

Fig. 100.

bishop, with all the infirmities, and all the victory, of his life, written on his calm, kind, and worldly face. He has been no dreamer, nor persecutor, but a helpful and undeceivable man; and by careful comparison of this conception with the common kinds of episcopal ideal in modern religious art, you will gradually feel how the force of Durer is joined with an unapproachable refinement, so that he can give the most practical view of whatever he treats, without the slightest taint or shadow of vulgarity. Lastly, the fresco of Giorgione, Plate 78, which is as fair a type as I am able to give in any single figure, of the central Venetian art, will complete for us a series, sufficiently symbolical, of the several ranks of art, from lowest to highest.* In Wouvermans (of whose work I suppose no example is needed, it being so generally known), we have the entirely carnal mind,—wholly versed in the material world, and incapable of conceiving any goodness or greatness whatsoever.

In Angelico, you have the entirely spiritual mind, wholly versed in the heavenly world, and incapable of conceiving any wickedness or vileness whatsoever.

In Salvator, you have an awakened conscience, and some spiritual power, contending with evil, but conquered by it, and brought into captivity to it.

In Durer, you have a far purer conscience and higher

* As I was correcting these pages, there was put into my hand a little work by a very dear friend—"Travels and Study in Italy," by Charles Eliot Norton;—I have not yet been able to do more than glance at it; but my impression is, that by carefully reading it, together with the essay by the same writer on the Vita Nuova of Dante, a more just estimate may be formed of the religious art of Italy than by the study of any other books yet existing. At least, I have seen none in which the tone of thought was at once so tender and so just.

I had hoped, before concluding this book, to have given it a higher value by extracts from the works which have chiefly helped or guided me, especially from the writings of Helps, Lowell, and the Rev. A. J. Scott. But if I were to begin making such extracts, I find that I should not know, either in justice or affection, how to end.

spiritual power, yet, with some defect still in intellect, contending with evil, and nobly prevailing over it; yet retaining the marks of the contest, and never so entirely victorious as to conquer sadness.

In Giorgione, you have the same high spiritual power and practical sense; but now, with entirely perfect intellect, contending with evil; conquering it utterly, casting it away for ever, and rising beyond it into magnificence of rest.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TWO BOYHOODS.

§ 1. Born half-way between the mountains and the sea—that young George of Castelfranco—of the Brave Castle:—Stout George they called him, George of Georges, so goodly a boy he was—Giorgione.

Have you ever thought what a world his eyes opened on—fair, searching eyes of youth? What a world of mighty life, from those mountain roots to the shore;—of loveliest life, when he went down, yet so young, to the marble city—and became himself as a fiery heart to it?

A city of marble, did I say? nay, rather a golden city, paved with emerald. For truly, every pinnacle and turret glanced or glowed, overlaid with gold, or bossed with jasper. Beneath, the unsullied sea drew in deep breathing, to and fro, its eddies of green wave. Deep-hearted, majestic, terrible as the sea,—the men of Venice moved in sway of power and war; pure as her pillars of alabaster, stood her mothers and maidens; from foot to brow, all noble, walked her knights; the low bronzed gleaming of sea-rusted armor shot angrily under their blood-red mantle-folds. Fearless, faithful, patient, impenetrable, implacable,—every word a fate—sate her senate. In hope and honor, lulled by flowing of wave around their isles of sacred sand, each with his name written and the cross graved at his side, lay her dead. A wonderful piece of world. Rather, itsely a world. It

lay along the face of the waters, no larger, as its captains saw it from their masts at evening, than a bar of sunset that could not pass away; but, for its power, it must have seemed to them as if they were sailing in the expanse of heaven, and this a great planet, whose orient edge widened through ether. A world from which all ignoble care and petty thoughts were banished, with all the common and poor elements of life. No foulness, nor tumult, in those tremulous streets, that filled, or fell, beneath the moon; but rippled music of majestic change, or thrilling silence. No weak walls could rise above them; no low-roofed cottage, nor straw-built shed. Only the strength as of rock, and the finished setting of stones most precious. And around them, far as the eye could reach, still the soft moving of stainless waters, proudly pure; as not the flower, so neither the thorn nor the thistle, could grow in the glancing fields. Ethereal strength of Alps, dream-like, vanishing in high procession beyond the Torcellan shore; blue islands of Paduan hills, poised in the golden west. Above, free winds and fiery clouds ranging at their will;—brightness out of the north, and balm from the south, and the stars of the evening and morning clear in the limitless light of arched heaven and circling sea.

Such was Giorgione's school—such Titian's home.

§ 2. Near the southwest corner of Covent Garden, a square brick pit or well is formed by a close-set block of houses, to the back windows of which it admits a few rays of light. Access to the bottom of it is obtained out of Maiden Lane, through a low archway and an iron gate; and if you stand long enough under the archway to accustom your eyes to the darkness, you may see on the left hand a narrow door, which formerly gave quiet access to a respectable barber's shop, of which the front window, looking into Maiden Lane, is still extant, filled in this year (1860), with a row of bottles, connected, in

some defunct manner, with a brewer's business. A more fashionable neighborhood, it is said, eighty years ago than now—never certainly a cheerful one—wherein a boy being born on St. George's day, 1775, began soon after to take an interest in the world of Covent Garden, and put to service such spectacles of life as it afforded.

§ 3. No knights to be seen there, nor, I imagine, many beautiful ladies; their costume at least disadvantageous, depending much on incumbency of hat and feather, and short waists; the majesty of men founded similarly on shoebuckles and wigs;—impressive enough when Reynolds will do his best for it; but not suggestive of much ideal delight to a boy.

"Bello ovile dov' io dormii agnello:" of things beautiful, besides men and women, dusty sunbeams up or down the street on summer mornings; deep furrowed cabbage leaves at the greengrocer's; magnificence of oranges in wheelbarrows round the corner; and Thames' shore within three minutes' race.

§ 4. None of these things very glorious; the best, however, that England, it seems, was then able to provide for a boy of gift: who, such as they are, loves them—never, indeed, forgets them. The short waists modify to the last his visions of Greek ideal. His foregrounds had always a succulent cluster or two of greengrocery at the corners. Enchanted oranges gleam in Covent Gardens of the Hesperides; and great ships go to pieces in order to scatter chests of them on the waves. That mist of early sunbeams in the London dawn crosses, many and many a time, the clearness of Italian air; and by Thames' shore, with its stranded barges and glidings of red sail, dearer to us than Lucerne lake or Venetian lagoon,—by Thames' shore we will die.

§ 5. With such circumstances round him in youth, let us note what necessary effects followed upon the boy. I assume him to have had Giorgione's sensibility (and

more than Giorgione's, if that be possible) to color and form. I tell you farther, and this fact you may receive trustfully, that his sensibility to human affection and distress was no less keen than even his sense for natural beauty—heart-sight deep as eye-sight.

Consequently, he attaches himself with the faithfullest child-love to everything that bears an image of the place he was born in. No matter how ugly it is,—has it anything about it like Maiden Lane, or like Thames' shore? If so, it shall be painted for their sake. Hence, to the very close of life, Turner could endure ugliness which no one else, of the same sensibility, would have borne with for an instant. Dead brick walls, blank square windows, old clothes, market-womanly types of humanity—anything fishy and muddy, like Billingsgate or Hungerford Market, had great attraction for him; black barges, patched sails, and every possible condition of fog.

§ 6. You will find these tolerations and affections guiding or sustaining him to the last hour of his life; the notablest of all such endurances being that of dirt. No Venetian ever draws anything foul; but Turner devoted picture after picture to the illustration of effects of dinginess, smoke, soot, dust, and dusty texture; old sides of boats, weedy roadside vegetation, dung-hills, straw-yards, and all the soilings and stains of every common labor.

And more than this, he not only could endure, but enjoyed and looked for *litter*, like Covent Garden wreck after the market. His pictures are often full of it, from side to side; their foregrounds differ from all others in the natural way that things have of lying about in them. Even his richest vegetation, in ideal work, is confused; and he delights in shingle, débris, and heaps of fallen stones. The last words he ever spoke to me about a picture were in gentle exaltation about his St.

Gothard: "that *litter* of stones which I endeavored to represent."

§ 7. The second great result of this Covent Garden training was, understanding of and regard for the poor; whom the Venetians, we saw, despised; whom, contrarily, Turner loved, and more than loved—understood. He got no romantic sight of them, but an infallible one; as he prowled about the end of his lane, watching night effects in the wintry streets; nor sight of the poor alone, but of the poor in direct relations with the rich. He knew, in good and evil, what both classes thought of, and how they dwelt with, each other.

Reynolds and Gainsborough, bred in country villages, learned there the country boy's reverential theory of "the squire," and kept it. They painted the squire and the squire's lady as centres of the movements of the universe, to the end of their lives. But Turner perceived the younger squire in other aspects about his lane, occurring prominently in its night scenery, as a dark figure, or one of two, against the moonlight. He saw also the working of city commerce, from endless warehouse, towering over Thames, to the back shop in the lane, with its stale herrings—highly interesting these last; one of his father's best friends, whom he often afterwards visited affectionately at Bristol, being a fishmonger and glueboiler; which gives us a friendly turn of mind towards herring-fishing, whaling, Calais poissardes, and many other of our choicest subjects in after life; all this being connected with that mysterious forest below London Bridge on one side;—and, on the other, with these masses of human power and national wealth which weigh upon us, at Covent Garden here, with strange compression, and crush us into narrow Hand Court.

§ 8. "That mysterious forest below London Bridge"—better for the boy than wood of pine, or grove of

myrtle. How he must have tormented the watermen, beseeching them to let him crouch anywhere in the bows, quiet as a log, so only that he might get floated down there among the ships, and round and round the ships, and with the ships, and by the ships, and under the ships, staring and clambering;—these the only quite beautiful things he can see in all the world, except the sky; but these, when the sun is on their sails, filling or falling, endlessly disordered by sway of tide and stress of anchorage, beautiful unspeakably; which ships also are inhabited by glorious creatures—red-faced sailors, with pipes, appearing over the gunwales, true knights, over their castle parapets—the most angelic beings in the whole compass of London world. And Trafalgar happening long before we can draw ships, we, nevertheless, coax all current stories out of the wounded sailors, do our best at present to show Nelson's funeral streaming up the Thames; and vow that Trafalgar shall have its tribute of memory some day. Which, accordingly, is accomplished—once, with all our might, for its death; twice, with all our might, for its victory; thrice, in pensive farewell to the old Temeraire, and, with it, to that order of things.

§ 9. Now this fond companying with sailors must have divided his time, it appears to me, pretty equally between Covent Garden and Wapping (allowing for incidental excursions to Chelsea on one side, and Greenwich on the other), which time he would spend pleasantly, but not magnificently, being limited in pocket-money, and leading a kind of "Poor-Jack" life on the river.

In some respects, no life could be better for a lad. But it was not calculated to make his ear fine to the niceties of language, nor form his moralities on an entirely regular standard. Picking up his first scraps of vigorous English chiefly at Deptford and in the markets,

and his first ideas of female tenderness and beauty among nymphs of the barge and the barrow,—another boy might, perhaps, have become what people usually term "vulgar." But the original make and frame of Turner's mind being not vulgar, but as nearly as possible a combination of the minds of Keats and Dante, joining capricious waywardness, and intense openness to every fine pleasure of sense, and hot defiance of formal precedent, with a quite infinite tenderness, generosity, and desire of justice and truth—this kind of mind did not become vulgar, but very tolerant of vulgarity, even fond of it in some forms; and, on the outside, visibly infected by it, deeply enough; the curious result, in its combination of elements, being to most people wholly incomprehensible. It was as if a cable had been woven of blood-crimson silk, and then tarred on the outside. People handled it, and the tar came off on their hands; red gleams were seen through the black, underneath, at the places where it had been strained. Was it ochre?—said the world—or red lead?

§ 10. Schooled thus in manners, literature, and general moral principles at Chelsea and Wapping, we have finally to inquire concerning the most important point of all. We have seen the principal differences between this boy and Giorgione, as respects sight of the beautiful, understanding of poverty, of commerce, and of order of battle; then follows another cause of difference in our training—not slight,—the aspect of religion, namely, in the neighborhood of Covent Garden. I say the aspect; for that was all the lad could judge by. Disposed, for the most part, to learn chiefly by his eyes, in this special matter he finds there is really no other way of learning. His father taught him to "lay one penny upon another." Of mother's teaching, we hear of none; of parish pastoral teaching, the reader may guess how much.

§ 11. I chose Giorgione rather than Veronese to help

me in carrying out this parallel; because I do not find in Giorgione's work any of the early Venetian monarchist element. He seems to me to have belonged more to an abstract contemplative school. I may be wrong in this; it is no matter;—suppose it were so, and that he came down to Venice somewhat recusant, or insensient, concerning the usual priestly doctrines of his day,—how would the Venetian religion, from an outer intellectual standing-point, have *looked* to him?

§ 12. He would have seen it to be a religion indisputably powerful in human affairs; often very harmfully so; sometimes devouring widows' houses, and consuming the strongest and fairest from among the young; freezing into merciless bigotry the policy of the old: also, on the other hand, animating national courage, and raising souls, otherwise sordid, into heroism: on the whole, always a real and great power; served with daily sacrifice of gold, time, and thought; putting forth its claims, if hypocritically, at least in bold hypocrisy, not waiving any atom of them in doubt or fear; and, assuredly, in large measure, sincere, believing in itself, and believed: a goodly system, moreover, in aspect; gorgeous, harmonious, mysterious;—a thing which had either to be obeyed or combated, but could not be scorned. A religion towering over all the city—many buttressed—luminous in marble stateliness, as the dome of our Lady of Safety shines over the sea; many-voiced also, giving, over all the eastern seas, to the sentinel his watchword, to the soldier his war-cry; and, on the lips of all who died for Venice, shaping the whisper of death.

§ 13. I suppose the boy Turner to have regarded the religion of his city also from an external intellectual standing-point.

What did he see in Maiden Lane?

Let not the reader be offended with me; I am willing to let him describe, at his own pleasure, what Turner

saw there; but to me, it seems to have been this. A religion maintained occasionally, even the whole length of the lane, at point of constable's staff; but, at other times, placed under the custody of the beadle, within certain black and unstately iron railings of St. Paul's, Covent Garden. Among the wheelbarrows and over the vegetables, no perceptible dominance of religion; in the narrow, disquieted streets, none; in the tongues, deeds, daily ways of Maiden Lane, little. Some honesty, indeed, and English industry, and kindness of heart, and general idea of justice; but faith, of any national kind, shut up from one Sunday to the next, not artistically beautiful even in those Sabbatical exhibitions; its paraphernalia being chiefly of high pews, heavy elocution, and cold grimness of behavior.

What chiaroscuro belongs to it—(dependent mostly on candlelight),—we will, however, draw considerately; no goodliness of escutcheon, nor other respectability being omitted; and the best of their results confessed, a meek old woman and a child being let into a pew, for whom the reading by candlelight will be beneficial.*

§ 14. For the rest, this religion seems to him discreditable—discredited—not believing in itself, putting forth its authority in a cowardly way, watching how far it might be tolerated, continually shrinking, disclaiming, fencing, finessing; divided against itself, not by stormy rents, but by thin fissures, and splittings of plaster from the walls. Not to be either obeyed, or combated, by an ignorant, yet clear-sighted youth; only to be scorned. And scorned not one whit the less, though also the dome dedicated to *it* looms high over distant winding

* Liber Studiorum. "Interior of a church." It is worthy of remark that Giorgione and Titian are always delighted to have an opportunity of drawing priests. The English Church may, perhaps, accept it as matter of congratulation that this is the only instance in which Turner drew a clergyman.

of the Thames; as St. Mark's campanile rose, for goodly landmark, over mirage of lagoon. For St. Mark ruled over life; the Saint of London over death; St. Mark over St. Mark's Place, but St. Paul over St. Paul's Churchyard.

§ 15. Under these influences pass away the first reflective hours of life, with such conclusion as they can reach. In consequence of a fit of illness, he was taken—I cannot ascertain in what year—to live with an aunt, at Brentford; and here, I believe, received some schooling, which he seems to have snatched vigorously; getting knowledge, at least by translation, of the more picturesque classical authors, which he turned presently to use, as we shall see. Hence also, walks about Putney and Twickenham in the summer time acquainted him with the look of English meadow-ground in its restricted states of paddock and park; and with some round-headed appearances of trees, and stately entrances to houses of mark: the avenue at Bushy, and the iron gates and carved pillars of Hampton, impressing him apparently with great awe and admiration; so that in after life his little country house is,—of all places in the world,—at Twickenham! Of swans and reedy shores he now learns the soft motion and the green mystery, in a way not to be forgotten.

§ 16. And at last fortune wills that the lad's true life shall begin; and one summer's evening, after various wonderful stage-coach experiences on the north road, which gave him a love of stage-coaches ever after, he finds himself sitting alone among the Yorkshire hills.* For the first time, the silence of Nature round him, her freedom sealed to him, her glory opened to him. Peace

* I do not mean that this is his first acquaintance with the country, but the first impressive and touching one, after his mind was formed. The earliest sketches I found in the National Collection are at Clifton and Bristol; the next, at Oxford.

at last; no roll of cart-wheel, nor mutter of sullen voices in the back shop; but curlew-cry in space of heaven, and welling of bell-toned streamlet by its shadowy rock. Freedom at last. Dead-wall, dark railing, fenced field, gated garden, all passed away like the dream of a prisoner; and behold, far as foot or eye can race or range, the moor, and cloud. Loveliness at last. It is here then, among these deserted vales! Not among men. Those pale, poverty-struck, or cruel faces;—that multitudinous, marred humanity—are not the only things that God has made. Here is something He has made which no one has marred. Pride of purple rocks, and river pools of blue, and tender wilderness of glittering trees, and misty lights of evening on immeasurable hills.

§ 17. Beauty, and freedom, and peace; and yet another teacher, graver than these. Sound preaching at last here, in Kirkstall crypt, concerning fate and life. Here, where the dark pool reflects the chancel pillars, and the cattle lie in unhindered rest, the soft sunshine on their dappled bodies, instead of priests' vestments; their white furry hair ruffled a little, fitfully, by the evening wind, deep-scented from the meadow thyme.

§ 18. Consider deeply the import to him of this, his first sight of ruin, and compare it with the effect of the architecture that was around Giorgione. There were indeed aged buildings, at Venice, in his time, but none in decay. All ruin was removed, and its place filled as quickly as in our London; but filled always by architecture loftier and more wonderful than that whose place it took, the boy himself happy to work upon the walls of it; so that the idea of the passing away of the strength of men and beauty of their works never could occur to him sternly. Brighter and brighter the cities of Italy had been rising and broadening on hill and plain, for three hundred years. He saw only strength and immortality, could not but paint both; conceived

the form of man as deathless, calm with power, and fiery with life.

§ 19. Turner saw the exact reverse of this. In the present work of men, meanness, aimlessness, unsightliness: thin-walled, lath-divided, narrow-garreted houses of clay; booths of a darksome Vanity Fair, busily base.

But on Whitby Hill, and by Bolton Brook, remained traces of other handiwork. Men who could build had been there; and who also had wrought, not merely for their own days. But to what purpose? Strong faith, and steady hands, and patient souls—can this, then, be all you have left! this the sum of your doing on the earth!—a nest whence the night-owl may whimper to the brook, and a ribbed skeleton of consumed arches, looming above the bleak banks of mist, from its cliff to the sea?

As the strength of men to Giorgione, to Turner their weakness and vileness, were alone visible. They themselves, unworthy or ephemeral; their work, despicable, or decayed. In the Venetian's eyes, all beauty depended on man's presence and pride; in Turner's, on the solitude he had left, and the humiliation he had suffered.

§ 20. And thus the fate and issue of all his work were determined at once. He must be a painter of the strength of nature, there was no beauty elsewhere than in that; he must paint also the labor and sorrow and passing away of men; this was the great human truth visible to him.

Their labor, their sorrow, and their death. Mark the three. Labor; by sea and land, in field and city, at forge and furnace, helm and plough. No pastoral indolence nor classic pride shall stand between him and the troubling of the world; still less between him and the toil of his country,—blind, tormented, unwearied, marvellous England.

§ 21. Also their Sorrow; Ruin of all their glorious

work, passing away of their thoughts and their honor, mirage of pleasure, FALLACY OF HOPE; gathering of weed on temple step; gaining of wave on deserted strand; weeping of the mother for the children, desolate by her breathless first-born in the streets of the city,* desolate by her last sons slain, among the beasts of the field.†

§ 22. And their Death. That old Greek question again;—yet unanswered. The unconquerable spectre still flitting among the forest trees at twilight; rising ribbed out of the sea-sand;—white, a strange Aphrodite,—out of the sea-foam; stretching its gray, cloven wings among the clouds; turning the light of their sunsets into blood. This has to be looked upon, and in a more terrible shape than ever Salvator or Durer saw it. The wreck of one guilty country does not infer the ruin of all countries, and need not cause general terror respecting the laws of the universe. Neither did the orderly and narrow succession of domestic joy and sorrow in a small German community bring the question in its breadth, or in any unresolvable shape, before the mind of Durer. But the English death—the European death of the nineteenth century—was of another range and power; more terrible a thousand-fold in its merely physical grasp and grief; more terrible, incalculably, in its mystery and shame. What were the robber's casual pang, or the rage of the flying skirmish, compared to the work of the axe, and the sword, and the famine, which was done during this man's youth on all the hills and plains of the Christian earth, from Moscow to Gibraltar. He was eighteen years old when Napoleon came down on Arcola. Look on the map of Europe, and count the blood-stains on it, between Arcola and Waterloo.

* "The Tenth Plague of Egypt."

† "Rizpah, the Daughter of Aiah."

§ 23. Not alone those blood-stains on the Alpine snow, and the blue of the Lombard plain. The English death was before his eyes also. No decent, calculable, consoled dying; no passing to rest like that of the aged burghers of Nuremberg town. No gentle processions to churchyards among the fields, the bronze crests bossed deep on the memorial tablets, and the skylark singing above them from among the corn. But the life trampled out in the slime of the street, crushed to dust amidst the roaring of the wheel, tossed countlessly away into howling winter wind along five hundred leagues of rock-fanged shore. Or, worst of all, rotted down to forgotten graves through years of ignorant patience, and vain seeking for help from man, for hope in God—infirm, imperfect yearning, as of motherless infants starving at the dawn; oppressed royalties of captive thought, vague ague-fits of bleak, amazed despair.

§ 24. A goodly landscape this, for the lad to paint, and under a goodly light. Wide enough the light was, and clear; no more Salvator's lurid chasm on jagged horizon, nor Durer's spotted rest of sunny gleam on hedgerow and field; but light over all the world. Full shone now its awful globe, one pallid charnel-house,—a ball strewn bright with human ashes, glaring in poised sway beneath the sun, all blinding-white with death from pole to pole,—death, not of myriads of poor bodies only, but of will, and mercy, and conscience; death, not once inflicted on the flesh, but daily, fastening on the spirit; death, not silent or patient, waiting his appointed hour, but voiceful, venomous; death with the taunting word, and burning grasp, and infixed sting.

"Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe." The word is spoken in our ears continually to other reapers than the angels—to the busy skeletons that never tire for stooping. When the measure of iniquity is full, and it seems that another day might bring repentance and

redemption,—"Put ye in the sickle." When the young life has been wasted all away, and the eyes are just opening upon the tracks of ruin, and faint resolution rising in the heart for nobler things,—"Put ye in the sickle." When the roughest blows of fortune have been borne long and bravely, and the hand is just stretched to grasp its goal,—"Put ye in the sickle." And when there are but a few in the midst of a nation, to save it, or to teach, or to cherish; and all its life is bound up in those few golden ears,—"Put ye in the sickle, pale reapers, and pour hemlock for your feast of harvest home."

This was the sight which opened on the young eyes, this the watchword sounding within the heart of Turner in his youth.

So taught, and prepared for his life's labor, sate the boy at last alone among his fair English hills; and began to paint, with cautious toil, the rocks, and fields, and trickling brooks, and soft, white clouds of heaven.

CHAPTER X.

THE NEREID'S GUARD.

§ 1. The work of Turner, in its first period, is said in my account of his drawings at the National Gallery to be distinguished by "boldness of handling, generally gloomy tendency of mind, subdued color, and perpetual reference to precedent in composition." I must refer the reader to those two catalogues* for a more special account of his early modes of technical study. Here we are concerned only with the expression of that gloomy tendency of mind, whose causes we are now better able to understand.

§ 2. It was prevented from overpowering him by his labor. This, continual, and as tranquil in its course as a ploughman's in the field, by demanding an admirable humility and patience, averted the tragic passion of youth. Full of stern sorrow and fixed purpose, the boy set himself to his labor silently and meekly, like a workman's child on its first day at the cotton-mill. Without haste, but without relaxation,—accepting all modes and means of progress, however painful or humiliating, he took the burden on his shoulder and began his march. There was nothing so little, but that he noticed it; nothing so great but he began preparations to cope with it. For some time his work is, apparently,

* Notes on the Turner Collection at Marlborough House. 1857. Catalogue of the Sketches of J. M. W. Turner exhibited at Marlborough House. 1858.

feelingless, so patient and mechanical are the first essays. It gains gradually in power and grasp; there is no perceptible *aim* at freedom, or at fineness, but the force insensibly becomes swifter, and the touch finer. The color is always dark or subdued.

§ 3. Of the first forty subjects which he exhibited at the Royal Academy, thirty-one are architectural, and of these twenty-one are of elaborate Gothic architecture (Peterborough Cathedral, Lincoln Cathedral, Malmesbury Abbey, Tintern Abbey, &c.). I look upon the discipline given to his hand by these formal drawings as of the highest importance. His mind was also gradually led by them into a calmer pensiveness.* Education amidst country possessing architectural remains of some noble kind, I believe to be wholly essential to the progress of a landscape artist. The first verses he ever attached to a picture were in 1798. They are from Paradise Lost, and refer to a picture of Morning, on the Coniston Fells:—

> "Ye mists and exhalations, that now rise
> From hill or streaming lake, dusky or gray,
> Till the sun paints your fleecy skirts with gold,
> In honor to the world's great Author rise."

By glancing over the verses, which in following years† he quotes from Milton, Thompson, and Mallet, it may be seen at once how his mind was set, so far as natural

* The regret I expressed in the third volume at Turner's not having been educated under the influence of Gothic art was, therefore, mistaken; I had not then had access to his earlier studies. He *was* educated under the influence of Gothic architecture; but, in more advanced life, his mind was warped and weakened by classical architecture. Why he left the one for the other, or how far good influences were mingled with evil in the result of the change, I have not yet been able to determine.

† They may be referred to with ease in Boone's Catalogue of Turner's Pictures. 1857.

scenes were concerned, on rendering atmospheric effect; —and so far as emotion was to be expressed, how consistently it was melancholy.

He paints, first of heroic or meditative subjects, the Fifth Plague of Egypt; next, the Tenth Plague of Egypt. His first tribute to the memory of Nelson is the "Battle of the Nile," 1799. I presume an unimportant picture, as his power was not then availably developed. His first classical subject is Narcissus and Echo, in 1805:—

> "So melts the youth and languishes away,
> His beauty withers, and his limbs decay."

The year following he summons his whole strength, and paints what we might suppose would be a happier subject, the Garden of the Hesperides. This being the most important picture of the first period, I will analyze it completely.

§ 4. The fable of the Hesperides had, it seems to me, in the Greek mind two distinct meanings; the first referring to natural phenomena, and the second to moral. The natural meaning of it I believe to have been this:—

The Garden of the Hesperides was supposed to exist in the westernmost part of the Cyrenaica; it was generally the expression for the beauty and luxuriant vegetation of the coast of Africa in that district. The centre of the Cyrenaica "is occupied by a moderately elevated table-land, whose edge runs parallel to the coast, to which it sinks down in a succession of terraces, clothed with verdure, intersected by mountain streams running through ravines filled with the richest vegetation; well watered by frequent rains, exposed to the cool sea-breeze from the north, and sheltered by the mass of the mountain from the sands and hot winds of the Sahara." *

* Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography. Art. "Cyrenaica."

PLATE LXXVII.—QUIVI TROVAMMO.

The Greek colony of Cyrene itself was founded ten miles from the sea-shore, "in a spot backed by the mountains on the south, and thus sheltered from the fiery blasts of the desert; while at the height of about 1,800 feet an inexhaustible spring bursts forth amidst luxuriant vegetation, and pours its waters down to the Mediterranean through a most beautiful ravine."

The nymphs of the west, or Hesperides, are therefore, I believe, as natural types, the representatives of the soft western winds and sunshine, which were in this district most favorable to vegetation. In this sense they are called daughters of Atlas and Hesperis, the western winds being cooled by the snow of Atlas. The dragon, on the contrary, is the representative of the Sahara wind, or Simoom, which blew over the garden from among the hills on the south, and forbade all advance of cultivation beyond their ridge. Whether this was the physical meaning of the tradition in the Greek mind or not, there can be no doubt of its being Turner's first interpretation of it. A glance at the picture may determine this: a clear fountain being made the principal object in the foreground,—a bright and strong torrent in the distance,—while the dragon, wrapped in flame and whirlwind, watches from the top of the cliff.

§ 5. But, both in the Greek mind and Turner's, this natural meaning of the legend was a completely subordinate one. The moral significance of it lay far deeper. In the second, but principal sense, the Hesperides were not daughters of Atlas, nor connected with the winds of the west, but with its splendor. They are properly the nymphs of the sunset, and are the daughters of night, having many brothers and sisters, of whom I shall take Hesiod's account.

§ 6. "And the Night begat Doom, and short-withering Fate, and Death.

"And begat Sleep, and the company of Dreams, and Censure, and Sorrow.

"And the Hesperides, who keep the golden fruit beyond the night Sea.

"And the Destinies, and the Spirits of merciless punishment.

"And Jealousy, and Deceit, and Wanton Love; and Old Age, that fades away; and Strife, whose will endures."

§ 7. We have not, I think, hitherto quite understood the Greek feeling about those nymphs and their golden apples, coming as a light in the midst of cloud; between Censure, and Sorrow,—and the Destinies. We must look to the precise meaning of Hesiod's words, in order to get the force of the passage.

"The Night begat Doom;" that is to say, the doom of unforeseen accident—doom essentially of darkness.

"And short-withering Fate." Ill translated. I cannot do it better. It means especially the sudden fate which brings untimely end to all purpose, and cuts off youth and its promise; called, therefore (the epithet hardly ever leaving it), "black Fate."

"And Death." This is the universal, inevitable death, opposed to the interfering, untimely death. These three are named as the elder children. Hesiod pauses, and repeats the word "begat" before going on to number the others.

"And begat Sleep, and the company of Dreams."

"And *Censure*." "Momus," the Spirit of Blame—the spirit which desires to blame rather than to praise; false, base, unhelpful, unholy judgment;—ignorant and blind, child of the Night.

"And Sorrow." Accurately, sorrow of mourning; the sorrow of the night, when no man can work; of the night that falls when what was the light of the eyes is taken from us; lamenting, sightless sorrow, without hope,—child of Night.

PLATE LXXVIII.—THE HESPERID ÆGLE.

"And the Hesperides." We will come back to these.

"And the Destinies, and the Spirits of Merciless Punishment." These are the great Fates which have rule over conduct; the first fate spoken of (short-withering) is that which has rule over occurrence. These great Fates are Clotho, Lachesis, Atropos. Their three powers are—Clotho's over the clew, the thread, or connecting energy,—that is, the conduct of life; Lachesis' over the lot—that is to say, the chance which warps, entangles, or bends the course of life. Atropos, inflexible, cuts the thread forever.

"And Jealousy," especially the jealousy of Fortune, in balancing all good by evil. The Greeks had a peculiar dread of this form of fate.

"And Deceit, and sensual Love. And Old Age that fades, and Strife that endures;" that is to say, old age, which, growing not in wisdom, is marked only by its failing power — by the gradual gaining of darkness on the faculties, and helplessness on the frame, such age is the forerunner of true death—the child of Night. "And Strife," the last and the mightiest, the nearest to man of the Night-children—blind leader of the blind.

§ 8. Understanding thus whose sisters they are, let us consider of the Hesperides themselves—spoken of commonly as the "Singing Nymphs." They are four.

Their names are Æglé,—Brightness; Erytheia,—Blushing; Hestia,—the (spirit of the) Hearth; Arethusa,—the Ministering.

O English reader! hast thou ever heard of these fair and true daughters of Sunset, beyond the mighty sea?

And was it not well to trust to such keepers the guarding of the golden fruit which the earth gave to Juno at her marriage? Not fruit only: fruit on the tree, given by the earth, the great mother, to Juno (female power) at her marriage with Jupiter, or *ruling* manly power (distinguished from the tried and *agonizing* strength of Her-

cules). I call Juno, briefly, female power. She is, especially, the goddess presiding over marriage, regarding the woman as the mistress of a household. Vesta (the goddess of the hearth *), with Ceres, and Venus, are variously dominant over marriage, as the fulfilment of love; but Juno is pre-eminently the housewives' goddess. She, therefore, represents, in her character, whatever good or evil may result from female ambition, or desire of power: and, as to a housewife, the earth presents its golden fruit to her, which she gives to two kinds of guardians. The wealth of the earth, as the source of household peace and plenty, is watched by the singing nymphs—the Hesperides. But, as the source of household sorrow and desolation, it is watched by the Dragon.

We must, therefore, see who the Dragon was, and what kind of dragon.

§ 9. The reader will, perhaps, remember that we traced, in an earlier chapter, the birth of the Gorgons, through Phorcys and Ceto, from Nereus. The youngest child of Phorcys and Ceto is the Dragon of the Hesperides; but this latest descent is not, as in Northern traditions, a sign of fortunateness: on the contrary, the children of Nereus receive gradually more and more terror and power, as they are later born, till this last of the Nereids unites horror and power at their utmost. Observe the gradual change. Nereus himself is said to have been perfectly *true* and *gentle.*

This is Hesiod's account of him:—

"And Pontus begat Nereus, simple and true, the old-

* Her name is also that of the Hesperid nymph; but I give the Hesperid her Greek form of name, to distinguish her from the goddess. The Hesperid Arethusa has the same subordinate relation to Ceres; and Erytheia to Venus. Æglé signifies especially the spirit of brightness or cheerfulness; including even the subordinate idea of household neatness or cleanliness.

est of children; but they call him the aged man, in that he is errorless and kind; neither forgets he what is right; but knows all just and gentle counsel."

§ 10. Now the children of Nereus, like the Hesperides themselves, bear a twofold typical character; one physical, the other moral. In his physical symbolism, Nereus himself is the calm and gentle sea, from which rise, in gradual increase of terror, the clouds and storms. In his moral character, Nereus is the type of the deep, pure, rightly-tempered human mind, from which, in gradual degeneracy, spring the troubling passions.

Keeping this double meaning in view, observe the whole line of descent to the Hesperides' Dragon. Nereus, by the earth, begets (1) Thaumas (the wonderful), physically, the father of the Rainbow; morally, the type of the enchantments and dangers of imagination. His grandchildren, besides the Rainbow, are the Harpies. 2. Phorcys (Orcus ?), physically, the treachery or devouring spirit of the sea; morally, covetousness or malignity of heart. 3. Ceto, physically, the deep places of the sea; morally, secretness of heart, called "fair-cheeked," because tranquil in outward aspect. 4. Eurybia (wide strength), physically, the flowing, especially the tidal power of the sea (she, by one of the sons of Heaven, becomes the mother of the three great Titans, one of whom, Astræus, and the Dawn, are the parents of the four Winds); morally, the healthy passion of the heart. Thus far the children of Nereus.

§ 11. Next, Phorcys and Ceto, in their physical characters (the grasping or devouring of the sea, reaching out over the land and its depth) beget the Clouds and Storms—namely, first, the Graiæ, or soft rain-clouds; then the Gorgons, or storm-clouds; and youngest and last, the Hesperides' Dragon—Volcanic or earth-storm, associated, in conception, with the Simoom and fiery African winds.

But, in its moral significance, the descent is this. Covetousness, or malignity (Phorcys), and Secretness (Ceto), beget, first, the darkening passions, whose hair is always gray; then the stormy and merciless passions, brazen-winged (the Gorgons), of whom the dominant, Medusa, is ice-cold, turning all who look on her to stone. And, lastly, the consuming (poisonous and volcanic) passions—the "flame-backed dragon," uniting the powers of poison, and instant destruction. Now, the reader may have heard, perhaps, in other books of Genesis than Hesiod's, of a dragon being busy about a tree which bore apples, and of crushing the head of that dragon; but seeing how, in the Greek mind, this serpent was descended from the sea, he may, perhaps, be surprised to remember another verse, bearing also on the matter:—"Thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters;" and yet more surprised, going on with the Septuagint version, to find where he is being led: "Thou brakest the head of the dragon, and gavest him to be meat to the Ethiopian people. Thou didst tear asunder the strong fountains and the storm-torrents; thou didst dry up the rivers of Etham, πηγὰς καὶ χειμάῤῥους, the Pegasus fountains—Etham on the edge of the wilderness.

§ 12. Returning then to Hesiod, we find he tells us of the Dragon himself:—"He, in the secret places of the desert land, kept the all-golden apples in his great knots" (coils of rope, or extremities of anything). With which compare Euripides' report of him:—"And Hercules came to the Hesperian dome, to the singing maidens, plucking the apple fruit from the golden petals; slaying the flame-backed dragon, who twined round and round, kept guard in unapproachable spires" (spirals or whirls, as of a whirlwind-vortex).

Farther, we hear from other scattered syllables of tradition, that this dragon was sleepless, and that he was able to take various tones of human voice.

And we find a later tradition than Hesiod's calling him a child of Typhon and Echidna. Now Typhon is volcanic storm, generally the evil spirit of tumult.

Echidna (the adder) is a descendant of Medusa. She is a daughter of Chrysaor (the lightning), by Callirŏe (the fair flowing), a daughter of Ocean;—that is to say, she joins the intense fatality of the lightning with perfect gentleness. In form she is half-maiden, half-serpent; therefore she is the spirit of all the fatalest evil, veiled in gentleness: or, in one word, treachery;—having dominion over many gentle things;—and chiefly over a kiss, given, indeed, in another garden than that of the Hesperides, yet in relation to keeping of treasure also.

§ 13. Having got this farther clew, let us look who it is whom Dante makes the typical Spirit of Treachery. The eighth or lowest pit of hell is given to its keeping; at the edge of which pit, Virgil casts a *rope* down for a signal; instantly there rises, as from the sea, "as one returns who hath been down to loose some anchor," "the fell monster with the deadly sting, who passes mountains, breaks through fenced walls, and firm embattled spears; and with his filth taints all the world."

Think for an instant of another place:—"Sharp stones are under him, he laugheth at the shaking of a spear." We must yet keep to Dante, however. Echidna, remember, is half-maiden, half-serpent;—hear what Dante's Fraud is like:—

> "Forthwith that image vile of Fraud appear'd,
> His head and upper part exposed on land,
> But laid not on the shore his bestial train.
> His face the semblance of a just man's wore,
> So kind and gracious was its outward cheer;
> The rest was serpent all: two shaggy claws
> Reached to the armpits; and the back and breast,
> And either side, were painted o'er with nodes
> And orbits. Colors variegated more

Nor Turks nor Tartars e'er on cloth of state
With interchangeable embroidery wove,
Nor spread Arachne o'er her curious loom.
As oft-times a light skiff moor'd to the shore,
Stands part in water, part upon the land;
Or, as where dwells the greedy German boor,
The beaver settles, watching for his prey;
So on the rim, that fenced the sand with rock,
Sat perch'd the fiend of evil. In the void
Glancing, his tail upturn'd, its venomous fork
With sting like scorpion's arm'd."

§ 14. You observe throughout this description the leaning on the character of the *Sea* Dragon; a little farther on, his way of flying is told us:—

"As a small vessel backing out from land,
Her station quits; so thence the monster loos'd,
And, when he felt himself at large, turn'd round
There, where the breast had been, his fork'd tail.
Thus, like an eel, outstretch'd at length he steer'd,
Gathering the air up with retractile claws."

And lastly, his name is told us: Geryon. Whereupon, looking back at Hesiod, we find that Geryon is Echidna's brother. Man-serpent, therefore, in Dante, as Echidna is woman-serpent.

We find next that Geryon lived in the island of Erytheia (blushing), only another kind of blushing than that of the Hesperid Erytheia. But it is on, also, a western island, and Geryon kept red oxen on it (said to be near the red setting sun); and Hercules kills him, as he does the Hesperian dragon; but in order to be able to reach him, a golden boat is given to Hercules by the Sun, to cross the sea in.

§ 15. We will return to this part of the legend presently, having enough of it now collected to get at the complete idea of the Hesperian dragon, who is, in fine, the "Pluto il gran nemico" of Dante; the demon of all evil

passions connected with covetousness; that is to say, essentially of fraud, rage, and gloom. Regarded as the demon of fraud, he is said to be descended from the viper Echidna, full of deadly cunning, in whirl on whirl; as the demon of consuming Rage, from Phorcys; as the demon of Gloom, from Ceto;—in his watching and melancholy, he is sleepless (compare the Micyllus dialogue of Lucian); breathing whirlwind and fire, he is the destroyer, descended from Typhon as well as Phorcys; having, moreover, with all these, the irresistible strength of his ancestral sea.

§ 16. Now, look at him, as Turner has drawn him (Plate 77). I cannot reduce the creature to this scale without losing half his power; his length, especially, seems to diminish more than it should in proportion to his bulk. In the picture he is far in the distance, cresting the mountain; and may be, perhaps, three-quarters of a mile long. The actual length on the canvas is a foot and eight inches; so that it may be judged how much he loses by the reduction, not to speak of my imperfect etching,* and of the loss which, however well he might have been engraved, he would still have sustained, in the impossibility of expressing the lurid color of his armor, alternate bronze and blue.

§ 17. Still, the main points of him are discernible enough; and among all the wonderful things that Turner did in his day, I think this nearly the most wonderful. How far he had really found out for himself the collateral bearings of the Hesperid tradition I know not; but that he had got the main clew of it, and knew who the Dragon was, there can be no doubt; the strange thing is, that his conception of it throughout, down to the minutest detail, fits every one of the circumstances

* It is merely a sketch on the steel, like the illustrations before given of composition; but it marks the points needing note. Perhaps some day I may be able to engrave it of the full size.

of the Greek traditions. There is, first, the Dragon's descent from Medusa and Typhon, indicated in the serpent-clouds floating from his head (compare my sketch of the Medusa-cloud, Plate 71); then note the grovelling and ponderous body, ending in a serpent, of which we do not see the end. He drags the weight of it forward by his claws, not being able to lift himself from the ground ("Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell"); then the grip of the claws themselves as if they would clutch (rather than tear) the rock itself into pieces; but chiefly, the designing of the body. Remember, one of the essential characters of the creature, as descended from Medusa, is its coldness and petrifying power; this, in the demon of covetousness, must exist to the utmost; breathing fire, he is yet himself of ice. Now, if I were merely to draw this dragon as white, instead of dark, and take his claws away, his body would become a representation of a greater glacier, so nearly perfect, that I know no published engraving of glacier breaking over a rocky brow so like the truth as this dragon's shoulders would be, if they were thrown out in light; there being only this difference, that they have the form, but not the fragility of the ice; they are at once ice and iron. "His bones are like solid pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron; by his neesings a light doth shine."

§ 18. The strange unity of vertebrated action, and of a true bony contour, infinitely varied in every vertebra, with this glacial outline;—together with the adoption of the head of the Ganges crocodile, the fish-eater, to show his sea descent (and this in the year 1806, when hardly a single fossil saurian skeleton existed within Turner's reach), renders the whole conception one of the most curious exertions of the imaginative intellect with which I am acquainted in the arts.

§ 19. Thus far, then, of the dragon; next, we have to

examine the conception of the Goddess of Discord. We must return for a moment to the tradition about Geryon. I cannot yet decipher the meaning of his oxen, said to be fed together with those of Hades; nor of the journey of Hercules, in which, after slaying Geryon, he returns through Europe like a border forager, driving these herds, and led into farther battle in protection or recovery of them. But it seems to me the main drift of the legend cannot be mistaken; viz., that Geryon is the evil spirit of wealth, as arising from commerce; hence, placed as a guardian of isles in the most distant sea, and reached in a golden boat; while the Hesperian dragon is the evil spirit of wealth, as possessed in households; and associated, therefore, with the true household guardians, or singing nymphs. Hercules (manly labor), slaying both Geryon and Ladon, presents oxen and apples to Juno, who is their proper mistress; but the Goddess of Discord, contriving that one portion of this household wealth shall be ill bestowed by Paris, he, according to Coleridge's interpretation, choosing pleasure instead of wisdom or power;—there issue from this evil choice the catastrophe of the Trojan war, and the wanderings of Ulysses, which are essentially, both in the Iliad and Odyssey, the troubling of household peace; terminating with the restoration of this peace by repentance and patience; Helen and Penelope seen at last sitting upon their household thrones, in the Hesperian light of age.

§ 20. We have, therefore, to regard Discord, in the Hesperides garden, eminently as the disturber of households, assuming a different aspect from Homer's wild and fierce discord of war. They are, nevertheless, one and the same power; for she changes her aspect at will. I cannot get at the root of her name, Eris. It seems to me as if it ought to have one in common with Erinnys (Fury); but it means always contention, emulation, or

competition, either in mind or in words;—the final work of Eris is essentially "division," and she is herself always double-minded; shouts two ways at once (in Iliad, xi. 6), and wears a mantle rent in half (Æneid, viii. 702). Homer makes her loud-voiced, and insatiably covetous. This last attribute is, with him, the source of her usual title. She is little when she first is seen, then rises till her head touches heaven. By Virgil she is called mad; and her hair is of serpents, bound with bloody garlands.

§ 21. This is the conception first adopted by Turner, but combined with another which he found in Spenser; only note that there is some confusion in the minds of English poets between Eris (Discord) and Até (Error), who is a daughter of Discord, according to Hesiod. She is properly—mischievous error, tender-footed; for she does not walk on the earth, but on heads of men (Iliad, xix. 92); *i.e.*, not on the solid ground, but on human vain thoughts; therefore, her hair is glittering (Iliad, xix. 126). I think she is mainly the confusion of mind coming of pride, as Eris comes of covetousness; therefore, Homer makes her a daughter of Jove. Spenser, under the name of Até, describes Eris. I have referred to his account of her in my notice of the Discord on the Ducal palace of Venice (remember the inscription there, *Discordia sum, discordans*). But the stanzas from which Turner derived his conception of her are these—

"Als, as she double spake, so heard she double,
With matchlesse eares deformed and distort,
Filled with false rumors and seditious trouble,
Bred in assemblies of the vulgar sort,
That still are led with every light report:
And as her eares, so eke her feet were odde,
And much unlike; th' one long, the other short,
And both misplast; that, when th' one forward yode,
The other backe retired and contrárie trode.

"Likewise unequall were her handës twaine;
That one did reach, the other pusht away;

That one did make the other mard againe,
And sought to bring all things unto decay ;
Whereby great riches, gathered manie a day,
She in short space did often bring to nought,
An their possessours often did dismay :
For all her studie was, and all her thought
How she might overthrow the thing that Concord wrought.

" So much her malice did her might surpas,
That even th' Almightie selfe she did maligne,
Because to man so mercifull He was,
And unto all His creatures so benigne,
Sith she herself was of His grace indigne :
For all this world's faire workmanship she tride
Unto his last confusion to bring,
And that great golden chaine quite to divide,
With which it blessed Concord hath together tide."

All these circumstances of decrepitude and distortion Turner has followed, through hand and limb, with patient care : he has added one final touch of his own. The nymph who brings the apples to the goddess, offers her one in each hand ; and Eris, of the divided mind, cannot choose.

§ 22. One farther circumstance must be noted, in order to complete our understanding of the picture,—the gloom extending, not to the dragon only, but also to the fountain and the tree of golden fruit. The reason of this gloom may be found in two other passages of the authors from which Turner had taken his conception of Eris—Virgil and Spenser. For though the Hesperides in their own character, as the nymphs of domestic joy, are entirely bright (and the garden always bright around them), yet seen or remembered in sorrow, or in the presence of discord, they deepen distress. Their entirely happy character is given by Euripides :—" The fruit-planted shore of the Hesperides,—songstresses,—where the ruler of the purple lake allows not any more to the sailor his way, assigning the boundary of Heaven, which

Atlas holds; where the ambrosial fountains flow, and the fruitful and divine land increases the happiness of the gods."

But to the thoughts of Dido, in her despair, they recur under another aspect; she remembers their priestess as a great enchantress; who *feeds the dragons* and preserves the boughs of the tree; sprinkling moist honey and drowsy poppy; who also has power over ghosts; "and the earth shakes and the forests stoop from the hills at her bidding."

§ 23. This passage Turner must have known well, from his continual interest in Carthage: but his diminution of the splendor of the old Greek garden was certainly caused chiefly by Spenser's describing the Hesperides fruit as growing first in the garden of Mammon:—

"There mournfull cypresse grew in greatest store;
And trees of bitter gall; and heben sad;
Dead sleeping poppy; and black hellebore;
Cold coloquintida; and tetra mad
Mortal samnitis; and cicuta bad,
With which th' uniust Atheniens made to dy
Wise Socrates, who, thereof quaffing glad,
Pourd out his life and last philosophy.

* * * *

"The gardin of Prosèrpina this hight:
And in the midst thereof a silver seat,
With a thick arber goodly over dight,
In which she often usd from open heat
Herselfe to shroud, and pleasures to entreat:
Next thereunto did grow a goodly tree,
With braunches broad dispredd and body great,
Clothed with leaves, that none the wood mote see,
And loaden all with fruit as thick as it might bee.

"Their fruit were golden apples glistring bright,
That goodly was their glory to behold;
On earth like never grew, ne living wight
Like ever saw, but they from hence were sold;

For those, which Hercules with conquest bold
Got from great Atlas daughters, hence began.

* * * *

"Here eke that famous golden apple grew,
The which emongst the gods false Até threw."

There are two collateral evidences in the picture of Turner's mind having been partly influenced by this passage. The excessive darkness of the stream,—though one of the Cyrene fountains—to remind us of Cocytus; and the breaking of the bough of the tree by the weight of its apples—not healthily, but as a diseased tree would break.

§ 24. Such then is our English painter's first great religious picture; and exponent of our English faith. A sad-colored work, not executed in Angelico's white and gold; nor in Perugino's crimson and azure; but in a sulphurous hue, as relating to a paradise of smoke. That power, it appears, on the hill-top, is our British Madonna; whom, reverently, the English devotional painter must paint, thus enthroned, with nimbus about the gracious head. Our Madonna,—or our Jupiter on Olympus,—or, perhaps more accurately still, our unknown god, sea-born, with the cliffs, not of Cyrene, but of England, for his altar; and no chance of any Mars' Hill proclamation concerning him, "whom therefore ye ignorantly worship."

§ 25. This is no irony. The fact is verily so. The greatest man of our England, in the first half of the nineteenth century, in the strength and hope of his youth, perceives this to be the thing he has to tell us of utmost moment, connected with the spiritual world. In each city and country of past time, the master-minds had to declare the chief worship which lay at the nation's heart; to define it; adorn it; show the range and

authority of it. Thus in Athens, we have the triumph of Pallas; and in Venice the assumption of the Virgin; here, in England, is our great spiritual fact forever interpreted to us—the Assumption of the Dragon. No St. George any more to be heard of; no more dragon-slaying possible: this child, born on St. George's Day, can only make manifest the Dragon, not slay him, sea-serpent as he is; whom the English Andromeda, not fearing, takes for her lord. The fairy English Queen once thought to command the waves, but it is the sea-dragon now who commands her valleys; of old the Angel of the Sea ministered to them, but now the Serpent of the Sea; where once flowed their clear springs now spreads the black Cocytus pool; and the fair blooming of the Hesperid meadows fades into ashes beneath the Nereid's Guard.

Yes, Albert of Nuremberg; the time has at last come. Another nation has arisen in the strength of its Black anger; and another hand has portrayed the spirit of its toil. Crowned with fire, and with the wings of the bat.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HESPERID ÆGLÉ.

§ 1. FIVE years after the Hesperides were painted, another great mythological subject appeared by Turner's hand. Another dragon—this time not triumphant, but in death-pang; the Python, slain by Apollo.

Not in a garden, this slaying, but in a hollow, among wildest rocks, beside a stagnant pool. Yet, instead of the sombre coloring of the Hesperid hills, strange gleams of blue and gold flit around the mountain peaks, and color the clouds above them.

The picture is at once the type, and the first expression of a great change which was passing in Turner's mind. A change, which was not clearly manifested in all its results until much later in his life; but in the coloring of this picture are the first signs of it; and in the subject of this picture, its symbol.

§ 2. Had Turner died early, the reputation he would have left, though great and enduring, would have been strangely different from that which ultimately must now attach to his name. He would have been remembered as one of the severest of painters; his iron touch and positive form would have been continually opposed to the delicacy of Claude and richness of Titian; he would have been spoken of, popularly, as a man who had no eye for color. Perhaps here and there a watchful critic might have shown this popular idea to be false; but no conception could have been

formed by any one of the man's real disposition or capacity.

It was only after the year 1820 that these were determinable, and his peculiar work discerned.

§ 3. He had begun by faithful declaration of the sorrow there was in the world. It is now permitted him to see also its beauty. He becomes, separately and without rival, the painter of the loveliness and light of the creation.

Of its loveliness: that which may be beloved in it, the tenderest, kindest, most feminine of its aspects. Of its light: light not merely diffused, but interpreted; light seen pre-eminently in color.

Claude and Cuyp had painted the sun*shine*, Turner alone the sun *color*.

Observe this accurately. Those easily understood effects of afternoon light, gracious and sweet so far as they reach, are produced by the softly warm or yellow rays of the sun falling through mist. They are low in tone, even in nature, and disguise the colors of objects. They are imitable even by persons who have little or no gift of color, if the tones of the picture are kept low and in true harmony, and the reflected lights warm. But they never could be painted by great colorists. The fact of blue and crimson being effaced by yellow and gray, puts such effect at once out of the notice or thought of a colorist, unless he has some special interest in the motive of it. You might as well ask a musician to compose with only three notes, as Titian to paint without crimson and blue. Accordingly the colorists in general, feeling that no other than this yellow sunshine was imitable, refused it, and painted in twilight, when the color was full. Therefore, from the imperfect colorists,—from Cuyp, Claude, Both, Wilson, we get deceptive effect of sunshine; never from the Venetians, from Rubens, Reynolds, or Velasquez.

From these we get only conventional substitutions for it, Rubens being especially daring* in frankness of symbol.

§ 4. Turner, however, as a landscape painter, had to represent sunshine of one kind or another. He went steadily through the subdued golden chord, and painted Cuyp's favorite effect, "sun rising through vapor," for many a weary year. But this was not enough for him. He must paint the sun in his strength, the sun rising *not* through vapor. If you glance at that Apollo slaying the Python, you will see there is rose color and blue on the clouds, as well as gold; and if then you turn to the Apollo in the Ulysses and Polyphemus—his horses are rising beyond the horizon,—you see he is not "rising through vapor," but above it; gaining somewhat of a victory over vapor, it appears.

The old Dutch brewer, with his yellow mist, was a great man and a good guide, but he was not Apollo. He and his dray-horses led the way through the flats, cheerily, for a little time; we have other horses now flaming out "beyond the mighty sea."

A victory over vapor of many kinds; Python-slaying in general. Look how the Python's jaws smoke as he falls back between the rocks:—a vaporous serpent! We will see who he was, presently.

The public remonstrated loudly in the cause of Python: "He had been so yellow, quiet, and pleasant a creature; what meant these azure-shafted arrows, this sudden glare into darkness, this Iris message; Thaumantian;—miracle-working; scattering our slumber down in Cocytus?" It meant much, but that was not what they should have first asked about it. They should have asked simply, was it a true message? Were these Thaumantian things so, in the real universe?

* There is a very wonderful, and almost deceptive, imitation of sunlight by Rubens at Berlin. It falls through broken clouds upon angels, the flesh being checkered with sunlight and shade.

It might have been known easily they were. One fair dawn or sunset, obediently beheld, would have set them right; and shown that Turner was indeed the only true speaker concerning such things that ever yet had appeared in the world. They would neither look nor hear;—only shouted continuously, "Perish Apollo. Bring us back Python."

§ 5. We must understand the real meaning of this cry, for herein rests not merely the question of the great right or wrong in Turner's life, but the question of the right or wrong of all painting. Nay, on this issue hangs the nobleness of painting as an art altogether, for it is distinctively the art of coloring, not of shaping or relating. Sculptors and poets can do these, the painter's own work is color.

Thus, then, for the last time, rises the question, what is the true dignity of color? We left that doubt a little while ago among the clouds, wondering what they had been made so scarlet for. Now Turner brings the doubt back to us, unescapable any more. No man, hitherto, had painted the clouds scarlet. Hesperid Æglé, and Erytheia, throned there in the west, fade into the twilights of four thousand years, unconfessed. Here is at last one who confesses them, but is it well? Men say these Hesperids are sensual goddesses,—traitresses,—that the Graiæ are the only true ones. Nature made the western and the eastern clouds splendid in fallacy. Crimson is impure and vile; let us paint in black if we would be virtuous.

§ 6. Note, with respect to this matter, that the peculiar innovation of Turner was the perfection of the color chord by means of *scarlet*. Other painters had rendered the golden tones, and the blue tones, of sky; Titian especially the last, in perfectness. But none had dared to paint, none seem to have seen, the scarlet and purple.

Nor was it only in seeing this color in vividness when it occurred in full light, that Turner differed from preceding painters. His most distinctive innovation as a colorist was his discovery of the scarlet *shadow*. "True, there is a sunshine whose light is golden, and its shadow gray; but there is another sunshine, and that the purest, whose light is white, and its shadow scarlet." This was the essentially offensive, inconceivable thing, which he could not be believed in. There was some ground for the incredulity, because no color is vivid enough to express the pitch of light of pure white sunshine, so that the color given without the true intensity of light *looks* false. Nevertheless, Turner could not but report of the color truly. "I must indeed be lower in the key, but that is no reason why I should be false in the note. Here is sunshine which glows even when subdued; it has not cool shade, but fiery shade."* This is the glory of sunshine.

§ 7. Now, this scarlet color,—or pure red, intensified by expression of light,—is, of all the three primitive colors, that which is most distinctive. Yellow is of the nature of simple light; blue, connected with simple shade; but red is an entirely abstract color. It is red to which the color-blind are blind, as if to show us that it was not necessary merely for the service or comfort of man, but that there was a special gift or teaching in this color. Observe, farther, that it is this color which the sunbeams take in passing through the *earth's atmosphere*. The rose of dawn and sunset is the hue of the rays passing close over the earth. It is also concentrated in the blood of man.

* Not, accurately speaking, shadow, but dark side. All shadow proper is negative in color, but, generally, reflected light is warmer than direct light; and when the direct light is warm, pure, and of the highest intensity, its reflection is scarlet. Turner habitually, in his later sketches, used vermilion for his pen outline in effects of sun.

§ 8. Unforeseen requirements have compelled me to disperse through various works, undertaken between the first and last portions of this essay, the examination of many points respecting color, which I had intended to reserve for this place. I can now only refer the reader to these several passages,* and sum their import: which

* The following collected system of the various statements made respecting color in different parts of my works may be useful to the student:—

1st. Abstract color is of far less importance than abstract form (vol. i., chap. v.): that is to say, if it could rest in our choice whether we would carve like Phidias (supposing Phidias had never used color), or arrange the colors of a shawl like Indians, there is no question as to which power we ought to choose. The difference of rank is vast; there is no way of estimating or measuring it.

So, again, if it rest in our choice whether we will be great in invention of form, to be expressed only by light and shade, as Durer, or great in invention and application of color, caring only for ungainly form, as Bassano, there is still no question. Try to be Durer, of the two. So again, if we have to give an account or description of anything—if it be an object of high interest—its form will be always what we should first tell. Neither leopard spots nor partridge's signify primarily in describing either beast or bird. But teeth and feathers do.

2. Secondly. Though color is of less importance than form, if you introduce it at all, it must be right.

People often speak of the Roman school as if it were greater than the Venetian, because its color is "subordinate."

Its color is not subordinate. It is BAD.

If you paint colored objects, you must either paint them rightly or wrongly. There is no other choice. You may introduce as little color as you choose—a mere tint of rose in a chalk drawing, for instance; or pale hues generally—as Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel. All such work implies feebleness or imperfection, but not necessarily error. But if you paint with full color, as Raphael and Leonardo, you must either be true or false. If true, you will paint like a Venetian. If false, your form, supremely beautiful, may draw the attention of the spectator from the false color, or induce him to pardon it—and, if ill-taught, even to like it; but your picture is none the greater for that. Had Leonardo and Raphael colored like Giorgione, their work would have been greater, not less, than it is now.

3. To color perfectly is the rarest and most precious (technical)

is briefly, that color generally, but chiefly the scarlet, used with the hyssop, in the Levitical law, is the great sanctifying element of visible beauty inseparably connected with purity and life.

I must not enter here into the solemn and far-reaching

power an artist can possess. There have been only seven supreme colorists among the true painters whose works exist (namely, Giorgione, Titian, Veronese, Tintoret, Correggio, Reynolds, and Turner); but the names of great designers, including sculptors, architects, and metal-workers are multitudinous. Also, if you can color perfectly, you are sure to be able to do everything else if you like. There never yet was colorist who could not draw; but faculty of perceiving form may exist alone. I believe, however, it will be found ultimately that the *perfect* gifts of color and form always go together. Titian's form is nobler than Durer's, and more subtle; nor have I any doubt but that Phidias could have painted as nobly as he carved. But when the powers are not supreme, the wisest men usually neglect the color-gift, and develop that of form.

I have not thought it worth while at present to enter into any examination of the construction of Turner's color system, because the public is at present so unconscious of the meaning and nature of color that they would not know what I was talking of. The more than ludicrous folly of the system of modern water-color painting, in which it is assumed that every hue in the drawing may be beneficially washed into every other, must prevent, as long as it influences the popular mind, even incipient inquiry respecting color-art. But for help of any solitary and painstaking student, it may be noted that Turner's color is founded more on Correggio and Bassano than on the central Venetians; it involves a more tender and constant reference to light and shade than that of Veronese; and a more sparkling and gem-like lustre than that of Titian. I dislike using a technical word which has been disgraced by affectation, but there is no other word to signify what I mean in saying that Turner's color has, to the full, Correggio's "morbidezza," including also, in due place, conditions of mosaic effect, like that of the colors in an Indian design, unaccomplished by any previous master in painting; and a fantasy of inventive arrangement corresponding to that of Beethoven in music. In its concurrence with and expression of texture or construction of surfaces (as their bloom, lustre, or intricacy) it stands unrivalled—no still-life painting by any other master can stand for an instant beside Turner's, when his work is of life-size, as in his numerous studies of birds and their plumage. This "morbidezza" of color is associated, precisely as it was in Correggio, with an exquisite sensibility to fineness and in-

fields of thought which it would be necessary to traverse, in order to detect the mystical connection between life and love, set forth in that Hebrew system of sacrificial religion to which we may trace most of the received

tricacy of curvature: curvature, as already noticed in the second volume, being to lines what gradation is to colors. This subject, also, is too difficult and too little regarded by the public, to be entered upon here, but it must be observed that this quality of Turner's design, the one which of all is best expressible by engraving, has of all been least expressed, owing to the constant reduction or change of proportion in the plates. Publishers, of course, require generally their plates to be of one size (the plates in this book form an appalling exception to received practice in this respect); Turner always made his drawings longer or shorter by half an inch, or more, according to the subject; the engravers contracted or expanded them to fit the books, with utter destruction of the nature of every curve in the design. Mere reduction necessarily involves such loss to some extent; but the degree in which it probably involves it has been curiously exemplified by the 62d Plate in this volume, reduced from a pen-drawing of mine, 18 inches long. Fig. 101 is a fac-simile of the hook and piece of drapery, in the foreground, in my drawing, which is very nearly true to the Turner curves: compare them with the curves either in Plate 62, or in the published engraving in the England Series. The Plate opposite (79) is a portion of the foreground of the drawing of the Llanberis (England Series), also of its real size; and interesting as showing the grace of Turner's curvature even when he was drawing fastest. It is a hasty drawing throughout, and after finishing the rocks and water, being apparently a little tired, he has struck out the broken fence of the watering-place for the cattle with a few impetuous dashes of the hand. Yet the curvature and grouping of line are still perfectly tender. How far the passage loses by reduction, may be seen by a glance at the published engraving.

Fig. 101.

4. Color, as stated in the text, is the purifying or sanctifying element of material beauty.

If so, how less important than form? Because, on form depends existence; on color, only purity. Under the Levitical law, neither scarlet nor hyssop could purify the deformed. So, under all natural law, there must be rightly shaped members first; then sanctifying color and fire in them.

PLATE LXXIX.—ROCKS AT REST.

PLATE LXXX.—ROCKS IN UNREST.

ideas respecting sanctity, consecration, and purification. This only I must hint to the reader—for his own following out—that if he earnestly examines the original sources from which our heedless popular language re-

Nevertheless, there are several great difficulties and oppositions of aspect in this matter, which I must try to reconcile now clearly and finally. As color is the type of Love, it resembles it in all its modes of operation; and in practical work of human hands, it sustains changes of worthiness precisely like those of human sexual love. That love, when true, faithful, well-fixed, is eminently the sanctifying element of human life: without it, the soul cannot reach its fullest height of holiness. But if shallow, faithless, misdirected, it is also one of the strongest corrupting and degrading elements of life.

Between these base and lofty states of Love are the loveless states; some cold and horrible; others chaste, childish, or ascetic, bearing to careless thinkers the semblance of purity higher than that of Love.

So it is with the type of Love—color. Followed rashly, coarsely, untruly, for the mere pleasure of it, with no reverence, it becomes a temptation, and leads to corruption. Followed faithfully, with intense but reverent passion, it is the holiest of all aspects of material things.

Between these two modes of pursuing it, come two modes of refusing it—one, dark and sensual; the other, statuesque and grave, having great aspect of nobleness.

Thus we have, first, the coarse love of color, as a vulgar person's choice of gaudy hues in dress.

Then, again, we have the base disdain of color, of which I have spoken at length elsewhere. Thus we have the lofty disdain of color, as in Durer's and Raphael's drawing: finally, the severest and passionate following of it, in Giorgione and Titian.

5. Color is, more than all elements of art, the reward of veracity of purpose. This point respecting it I have not noticed before, and it is highly curious. We have just seen that in giving an account of anything for its own sake, the most important points are those of form. Nevertheless, the form of the object is its own attribute; special, not shared with other things. An error in giving an account of it does not necessarily involve wider error.

But its color is partly its own, partly shared with other things round it. The hue and power of all broad sunlight is involved in the color it has cast upon this single thing; to falsify that color, is to misrepresent and break the harmony of the day: also, by what color it bears, this single object is altering hues all round it; reflecting its own into them, displaying them by opposition, softening them by

specting the washing away of sins has been borrowed, he will find that the fountain in which sins are indeed to be washed away, is that of love, not of agony.

§ 9. But, without approaching the presence of this deeper meaning of the sign, the reader may rest satisfied with the connection given him directly in written words, between the cloud and its bow. The cloud, or firmament, as we have seen, signifies the ministration of the heavens to man. That ministration may be in judgment or mercy—in the lightning, or the dew. But the bow, or color, of the cloud, signifies always mercy, the sparing of life; such ministry of the heaven, as shall feed and prolong life. And as the sunlight, undivided, is the type of the wisdom and righteousness of God, so

repetition; one falsehood in color in one place, implies a thousand in the neighborhood. Hence there are peculiar penalties attached to falsehood in color, and peculiar rewards granted to veracity in it. Form may be attained in perfectness by painters who, in their course of study, are continually altering or idealizing it; but only the sternest fidelity will reach coloring. Idealize or alter in that, and you are lost. Whether you alter by abasing, or exaggerating,—by glare or by decline, one fate is for you—ruin. Violate truth wilfully in the slightest particular, or, at least, get into the habit of violating it, and all kinds of failure and error will surround and haunt you to your fall.

Therefore, also, as long as you are working with form only, you may amuse yourself with fancies; but color is sacred—in that you must keep to facts. Hence the apparent anomaly that the only schools of color are the schools of Realism. The men who care for form only, may drift about in dreams of Spiritualism; but a colorist must keep to substance. The greater his power in color enchantment, the more stern and constant will be his common sense. Fuseli may wander wildly among gray spectra, but Reynolds and Gainsborough must stay in broad daylight, with pure humanity. Velasquez, the greatest colorist, is the most accurate portrait painter of Spain; Holbein, the most accurate portrait painter, is the only colorist of Germany; and even Tintoret had to sacrifice some of the highest qualities of his color before he could give way to the flights of wayward though mighty imagination, in which his mind rises or declines from the royal calm of Titian.

divided, and softened into color by means of the fundamental ministry, fitted to every need of man, as to every delight, and becoming one chief source of human beauty, by being made part of the flesh of man;—thus divided, the sunlight is the type of the wisdom of God, becoming sanctification and redemption. Various in work—various in beauty—various in power.

Color is, therefore, in brief terms, the type of love. Hence it is especially connected with the blossoming of the earth; and again, with its fruits; also, with the spring and fall of the leaf, and with the morning and evening of the day, in order to show the waiting of love about the birth and death of man.

§ 10. And now, I think, we may understand, even far away in the Greek mind, the meaning of that contest of Apollo with the Python. It was a far greater contest than that of Hercules with Ladon. Fraud and avarice might be overcome by frankness and force; but this Python was a darker enemy, and could not be subdued but by a greater god. Nor was the conquest slightly esteemed by the victor deity. He took his great name from it thenceforth—his prophetic and sacred name—the Pythian.

It could, therefore, be no merely devouring dragon—no mere wild beast with scales and claws. It must possess some more terrible character to make conquest over it so glorious. Consider the meaning of its name, "THE CORRUPTER." That Hesperid dragon was a treasure-guardian. This is the treasure-destroyer,—where moth and rust doth corrupt — the worm of eternal decay.

Apollo's contest with him is the strife of purity with pollution; of life, with forgetfulness; of love, with the grave.

§ 11. I believe this great battle stood, in the Greek mind, for the type of the struggle of youth and man-

hood with deadly sin—venomous, infectious, irrecoverable sin. In virtue of his victory over this corruption, Apollo becomes thenceforward the guide; the witness; the purifying and helpful God. The other gods help waywardly, whom they choose. But Apollo helps always: he is by name, not only Pythian, the conqueror of death; but Pæan—the healer of the people.

Well did Turner know the meaning of that battle: he has told its tale with fearful distinctness. The Mammon dragon was armed with adamant; but this dragon of decay is a mere colossal worm: wounded, he bursts asunder in the midst,* and melts to pieces, rather than dies, vomiting smoke—a smaller serpent-worm rising out of his blood.

§ 12. Alas, for Turner! This smaller serpent-worm, it seemed, he could not conceive to be slain. In the midst of all the power and beauty of nature, he still saw this death-worm writhing among the weeds. A little thing now, yet enough; you may see it in the foreground in the Bay of Baiæ, which has also in it the story of Apollo and the Sibyl; Apollo giving love; but not youth, nor immortality: you may see it again in the foreground of the Lake Avernus—the Hades lake—which Turner surrounds with delicatest beauty, the Fates dancing in circle; but in front, is the serpent beneath the thistle and the wild thorn. The same Sibyl, Deiphobe, holding the golden bough. I cannot get at the meaning of this legend of the bough; but it was, assuredly, still connected, in Turner's mind, with that help from Apollo. He indicated the strength of his feeling at the time when he painted the Python contest, by the drawing exhibited the same year, of the prayer of Chryses. There the priest is on the beach alone, the sun setting. He prays to it as it descends;—flakes of its sheeted light are borne to him by the

* Compare the deaths of Jehoram, Herod, and Judas.

melancholy waves, and cast away with sighs upon the sand.

How this sadness came to be persistent over Turner, and to conquer him, we shall see in a little while. It is enough for us to know at present that our most wise and Christian England, with all her appurtenances of school-porch and church-spire, had so disposed her teaching as to leave this somewhat notable child of hers without even cruel Pandora's gift.

He was without hope.

True daughter of Night, Hesperid Æglé was to him; coming between Censure, and Sorrow,—and the Destinies.

§ 13. What, for us, his work yet may be, I know not. But let not the real nature of it be misunderstood any more.

He is distinctively, as he rises into his own peculiar strength, separating himself from all men who had painted forms of the physical world before,—the painter of the loveliness of nature, with the worm at its root: Rose and canker-worm,—both with his utmost strength; the one *never* separate from the other.

In which his work was the true image of his own mind.

I would fain have looked last at the rose; but that is not the way Atropos will have it, and there is no pleading with her.

So, therefore, first of the rose.

§ 14. That is to say, of this vision of the loveliness and kindness of Nature, as distinguished from all visions of her ever received by other men. By the Greek, she had been distrusted. She was to him Calypso, the Concealer, Circe, the Sorceress. By the Venetian, she had been dreaded. Her wildernesses were desolate; her shadows stern. By the Fleming, she had been despised; what mattered the heavenly colors to

him? But at last, the time comes for her loveliness and kindness to be declared to men. Had they helped Turner, listened to him, believed in him, he had done it wholly for them. But they cried out for Python, and Python came;—came literally as well as spiritually;—all the perfectest beauty and conquest which Turner wrought is already withered. The canker-worm stood at his right hand, and of all his richest, most precious work, there remains only the shadow. Yet that shadow is more than other men's sunlight; it is the scarlet shade, shade of the Rose. Wrecked, and faded, and defiled, his work still, in what remains of it, or may remain, is the loveliest ever yet done by man, in imagery of the physical world. Whatsoever is there of fairest, you will find recorded by Turner, and by him alone.

§ 15. I say *you* will find, not knowing to how few I speak; for in order to find what is fairest, you must delight in what is fair; and I know not how few or how many there may be who take such delight. Once I could speak joyfully about beautiful things, thinking to be understood;—now I cannot any more; for it seems to me that no one regards them. Wherever I look or travel in England or abroad, I see that men, wherever they can reach, destroy all beauty. They seem to have no other desire or hope but to have large houses and to be able to move fast. Every perfect and lovely spot which they can touch, they defile.*

§ 16. Nevertheless, though not joyfully, or with any hope of being at present heard, I would have tried to enter here into some examination of the right and worthy effect of beauty in Art upon human mind, if I had been myself able to come to demonstrable conclusions.

* Thus, the railroad bridge over the Fall of Schaffhausen, and that round the Clarens shore of the lake of Geneva, have destroyed the power of two pieces of scenery of which nothing can ever supply the place, in appeal to the higher ranks of European mind.

But the question is so complicated with that of the enervating influence of all luxury, that I cannot get it put into any tractable compass. Nay, I have many inquiries to make, many difficult passages of history to examine, before I can determine the just limits of the hope in which I may permit myself to continue to labor in any cause of Art.

Nor is the subject connected with the purpose of this book. I have written it to show that Turner is the greatest landscape painter who ever lived; and this it has sufficiently accomplished. What the final use may be to men, of landscape painting, or of any painting, or of natural beauty, I do not yet know. Thus far, however, I *do* know.

§ 17. Three principal forms of asceticism have existed in this weak world. Religious asceticism, being the refusal of pleasure and knowledge for the sake (as supposed) of religion; seen chiefly in the middle ages. Military asceticism, being the refusal of pleasure and knowledge for the sake of power; seen chiefly in the early days of Sparta and Rome. And monetary asceticism, consisting in the refusal of pleasure and knowledge for the sake of money; seen in the present days of London and Manchester.

"We do not come here to look at the mountains," said the Carthusian to me at the Grande Chartreuse. "We do not come here to look at the mountains," the Austrian generals would say, encamping by the shores of Garda. "We do not come here to look at the mountains," so the thriving manufacturers tell me, between Rochdale and Halifax.

§ 18. All these asceticisms have their bright and their dark sides. I myself like the military asceticism best, because it is not so necessarily a refusal of general knowledge as the two others, but leads to acute and marvellous use of mind, and perfect use of body. Nev-

ertheless, none of the three are a healthy or central state of man. There is much to be respected in each, but they are not what we should wish large numbers of men to become. A monk of La Trappe, a French soldier of the Imperial Guard, and a thriving mill-owner, supposing each a type, and no more than a type, of his class, are all interesting specimens of humanity, but narrow ones,—so narrow that even all the three together would not make a perfect man. Nor does it appear in any way desirable that either of the three classes should extend itself so as to include a majority of the persons in the world, and turn large cities into mere groups of monastery, barracks, or factory. I do not say that it may not be desirable that one city, or one country, sacrificed for the good of the rest, should become a mass of barracks or factories. Perhaps, it may be well that this England should become the furnace of the world; so that the smoke of the island, rising out of the sea, should be seen from a hundred leagues away, as if it were a field of fierce volcanoes; and every kind of sordid, foul, or venomous work which in other countries men dreaded or disdained, it should become England's duty to do,—becoming thus the offscourer of the earth, and taking the hyena instead of the lion upon her shield. I do not, for a moment, deny this; but, looking broadly, not at the destiny of England, nor of any country in particular, but of the world, this is certain—that men exclusively occupied either in spiritual reverie, mechanical destruction, or mechanical productiveness, fall below the proper standard of their race, and enter into a lower form of being; and that the true perfection of the race, and, therefore, its power and happiness, are only to be attained by a life which is neither speculative nor productive; but essentially contemplative and protective, which (A) does not lose itself in the monk's vision or hope, but delights in seeing present and real things as

they truly are; which (B) does not mortify itself for the sake of obtaining powers of destruction, but seeks the more easily attainable powers of affection, observance, and protection; which (C), finally, does not mortify itself with a view to productive accumulation, but delights itself in peace, with its appointed portion. So that the things to be desired for man in a healthy state, are that he should not see dreams, but realities; that he should not destroy life, but save it; and that he should be not rich, but content.

§ 19. Towards which last state of contentment, I do not see that the world is at present approximating. There are, indeed, two forms of discontent: one laborious, the other indolent and complaining. We respect the man of laborious desire, but let us not suppose that his restlessness is peace, or his ambition meekness. It is because of the special connection of meekness with contentment that it is promised that the meek shall "inherit the earth." Neither covetous men, nor the Grave, can inherit anything;* they can but consume. Only contentment can possess.

§ 20. The most helpful and sacred work, therefore, which can at present be done for humanity, is to teach people (chiefly by example, as all best teaching must be done) not how "to better themselves," but how to "satisfy themselves." It is the curse of every evil nation and evil creature to eat, and *not* be satisfied. The words of blessing are, that they shall eat and be satisfied. And as there is only one kind of water which quenches all thirst, so there is only one kind of bread which satisfies all hunger, the bread of justice or righteousness; which hungering after, men shall always be filled, that being the bread of Heaven; but hungering

* "There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, It is enough: the grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire, that saith not, It is enough!"

after the bread, or wages, of unrighteousness, shall not be filled, that being the bread of Sodom.

§ 21. And, in order to teach men how to be satisfied, it is necessary fully to understand the art and joy of humble life,—this, at present, of all arts or sciences being the one most needing study. Humble life—that is to say, proposing to itself no future exaltation, but only a sweet continuance; not excluding the idea of foresight, but wholly of fore-sorrow, and taking no troublous thought for coming days: so, also, not excluding the idea of providence, or provision,* but wholly of accumulation;—the life of domestic affection and domestic peace, full of sensitiveness to all elements of costless and kind pleasure;—therefore, chiefly to the loveliness of the natural world.

§ 22. What length and severity of labor may be ultimately found necessary for the procuring of the due comforts of life, I do not know; neither what degree of refinement it is possible to unite with the so-called servile occupations of life; but this I know, that right economy of labor will, as it is understood, assign to each man as much as will be healthy for him, and no more; and that no refinements are desirable which cannot be connected with toil.

I say, first, that due economy of labor will assign to each man the share which is right. Let no technical labor be wasted on things useless or unpleasurable;†

*A bad word, being only "foresight" again in Latin; but we have no other good English word for the sense into which it has been warped.

†I cannot repeat too often (for it seems almost impossible to arouse the public mind in the least to a sense of the fact) that the root of all benevolent and healthful action towards the lower classes consists in the wise direction of purchase; that is to say, in spending money, as far as possible, only for products of healthful and natural labor. All work with fire is more or less harmful and degrading; so also mine, or machine labor. They at present develop more intelligence than

and let all physical exertion, so far as possible, be utilized, and it will be found no man need ever work more than is good for him. I believe an immense gain in the bodily health and happiness of the upper classes would follow on their steadily endeavoring, however clumsily,

rural labor, but this is only because no education, properly so called, being given to the lower classes, those occupations are best for them which compel them to attain some accurate knowledge, discipline them in presence of mind, and bring them within spheres in which they may raise themselves to positions of command. Properly taught, a ploughman ought to be more intelligent, as well as more healthy, than a miner.

Every nation which desires to ennoble itself should endeavor to maintain as large a number of persons as possible by rural and maritime labor (including fishing). I cannot in this place enter into consideration of the relative advantages of different channels of industry. Any one who sincerely desires to act upon such knowledge will find no difficulty in obtaining it.

I have also several series of experiments and inquiries to undertake before I shall be able to speak with security on certain points connected with education; but I have no doubt that every child in a civilized country should be taught the first principles of natural history, physiology, and medicine; also to sing perfectly, so far as it has capacity, and to draw any definite form accurately to any scale.

These things it should be taught by requiring its attendance at school not more than three hours a day, and less if possible (the best part of children's education being in helping their parents and families). The other elements of its instruction ought to have respect to the trade by which it is to live.

Modern systems of improvement are too apt to confuse the recreation of the workman with his education. He should be educated for his work before he is allowed to undertake it; and refreshed and relieved while he practises it.

Every effort should be made to induce the adoption of a national costume. Cleanliness and neatness in dress ought always to be rewarded by some gratification of personal pride; and it is the peculiar virtue of a national costume that it fosters and gratifies the wish to look well, without inducing the desire to look better than one's neighbors—or the hope, peculiarly English, of being mistaken for a person in a higher position of life. A costume may indeed become coquettish, but rarely indecent or vulgar; and though a French bonne or Swiss farm girl may dress so as sufficiently to mortify her equals, neither of them ever desires or expects to be mistaken for her mistress.

to make the physical exertion they now necessarily take in amusements, definitely serviceable. It would be far better, for instance, that a gentleman should mow his own fields, than ride over other people's.

§ 23. Again, respecting degrees of possible refinement, I cannot yet speak positively, because no effort has yet been made to teach refined habits to persons of simple life.

The idea of such refinement has been made to appear absurd, partly by the foolish ambition of vulgar persons in low life, but more by the worse than foolish assumption, acted on so often by modern advocates of improvement, that "education" means teaching Latin, or algebra, or music, or drawing, instead of developing or "drawing out" the human soul.

It may not be the least necessary that a peasant should know algebra, or Greek, or drawing. But it may, perhaps, be both possible and expedient that he should be able to arrange his thoughts clearly, to speak his own language intelligibly, to discern between right and wrong, to govern his passions, and to receive such pleasures of ear or sight as his life may render accessible to him. I would not have him taught the science of music; but most assuredly I would have him taught to sing. I would not teach him the science of drawing; but certainly I would teach him to see; without learning a single term of botany, he should know accurately the habits and uses of every leaf and flower in his fields; and unencumbered by any theories of moral or political philosophy, he should help his neighbor, and disdain a bribe.

§ 24. Many most valuable conclusions respecting the degree of nobleness and refinement which may be attained in servile or in rural life may be arrived at by a careful study of the noble writings of Blitzius (Jeremias Gotthelf), which contain a record of Swiss character not less valuable in its fine truth than that which Scott has

left of the Scottish. I know no ideal characters of women, whatever their station, more majestic than that of Freneli (in Ulric le Valet de Ferme, and Ulric le Fermier); or of Elise, in the Tour de Jacob; nor any more exquisitely tender and refined than that of Aenneli in the Fromagerie and Aenneli in the Miroir des Paysans.*

§ 25. How far this simple and useful pride, this delicate innocence, might be adorned, or how far destroyed, by higher intellectual education in letters or the arts, cannot be known without other experience than the charity of men has hitherto enabled us to acquire.

All effort in social improvement is paralyzed, because no one has been bold or clear-sighted enough to put and press home this radical question: "What is indeed the noblest tone and reach of life for men; and how can the possibility of it be extended to the greatest numbers?" It is answered, broadly and rashly, that wealth is good; that knowledge is good; that art is good; that luxury is good. Whereas none of them are good in the abstract, but good only if rightly received. Nor have any steps whatever been yet securely taken,—nor, otherwise than in the resultless rhapsody of moralists,—to ascertain what luxuries and what learning it is either kind to bestow, or wise to desire. This, however, at least we know, shown clearly by the history of all time, that the arts and sciences, ministering to the pride of nations, have invariably hastened their ruin; and this, also, without venturing to say that I know, I nevertheless firmly believe, that the same arts and sciences will tend as distinctly to exalt the strength and quicken the soul of every nation which employs them to increase the com-

* This last book should be read carefully by all persons interested in social questions. It is sufficiently dull as a tale, but is characterized throughout by a restrained tragic power of the highest order; and it would be worth reading, were it only for the story of Aenneli, and for the last half page of its close.

fort of lowly life, and grace with happy intelligence the unambitious courses of honorable toil.

Thus far, then, of the Rose.

§ 26. Last, of the Worm.

I said that Turner painted the labor of men, their sorrow, and their death. This he did nearly in the same tones of mind which prompted Byron's poem of Childe Harold, and the loveliest result of his art, in the central period of it, was an effort to express on a single canvas the meaning of that poem. It may be now seen, by strange coincidence, associated with two others — Caligula's Bridge and the Apollo and Sibyl; the one illustrative of the vanity of human labor, the other of the vanity of human life.* He painted these, as I said, in the same tone of mind which formed the Childe Harold poem, but with different capacity: Turner's sense of beauty was perfect; deeper, therefore, far than Byron's; only that of Keats and Tennyson being comparable with it. And Turner's love of truth was as stern and patient as Dante's; so that when over these great capacities come the shadows of despair, the wreck is infinitely sterner and more sorrowful. With no sweet home for his childhood,—friendless in youth,—loveless in manhood,—and hopeless in death, Turner was what Dante might have been, without the "bello ovile," without Casella, without Beatrice, and without Him who gave them all, and took them all away.

§ 27. I will trace this state of his mind farther, in a little while. Meantime, I want you to note only the

* "The Cumæan Sibyl, Deiphobe, was, in her youth, beloved by Apollo; who, promising to grant her whatever she would ask, she took up a handful of earth, and asked that she might live as many years as there were grains of dust in her hand. She obtained her petition. Apollo would have granted her perpetual youth in return for her love, but she denied him, and wasted into the long ages —known, at last, only by her voice."—(See my notes on the Turner Gallery.)

result upon his work;—how, through all the remainder of his life, wherever he looked, he saw ruin.

Ruin, and twilight. What was the distinctive effect of light which he introduced, such as no man had painted before? Brightness, indeed, he gave, as we have seen, because it was true and right; but in this he only perfected what others had attempted. His own favorite light is not Æglé, but Hesperid Æglé. Fading of the last rays of sunset. Faint breathing of the sorrow of night.

§ 28. And fading of sunset, note also, on ruin. I cannot but wonder that this difference between Turner's work and previous art-conception has not been more observed. None of the great early painters draw ruins, except compulsorily. The shattered buildings introduced by them are shattered artificially, like models. There is no real sense of decay; whereas Turner only momentarily dwells on anything else than ruin. Take up the Liber Studiorum, and observe how this feeling of decay and humiliation gives solemnity to all its simplest subjects: even to his view of daily labor. I have marked its tendency in examining the design of the Mill and Lock, but observe its continuance through the book. There is no exultation in thriving city, or mart, or in happy rural toil, or harvest gathering. Only the grinding at the mill, and patient striving with hard conditions of life. Observe the two disordered and poor farm-yards, cart, and ploughshare, and harrow rotting away; note the pastoral by the brook-side, with its neglected stream, and haggard trees, and bridge with the broken rail, and decrepit children—fever-struck—one sitting stupidly by the stagnant stream; the other in rags, and with an old man's hat on, and lame, leaning on a stick. Then the "Hedging and Ditching," with its bleak sky and blighted trees—hacked, and bitten, and starved by the clay soil into something be-

tween trees and firewood; its meanly-faced, sickly laborers—pollard laborers, like the willow trunk they hew; and the slatternly peasant-woman, with worn cloak and battered bonnet—an English Dryad. Then the Water-mill, beyond the fallen steps overgrown with the thistle: itself a ruin, mud-built at first, now propped on both sides;—the planks torn from its cattle-shed; a feeble beam, splintered at the end, set against the dwelling-house from the ruined pier of the watercourse; the old millstone—useless for many a day—half buried in slime, at the bottom of the wall; the listless children, listless dog, and the poor gleaner bringing her single sheaf to be ground. Then the "Peat bog," with its cold, dark rain, and dangerous labor. And last and chief, the mill in the valley of the Chartreuse. Another than Turner would have painted the convent; but he had no sympathy with the hope, no mercy for the indolence of the monk. He painted the mill in the valley. Precipice overhanging it, and wildness of dark forest round; blind rage and strength of mountain torrent rolled beneath it,—calm sunset above, but fading from the glen, leaving it to its roar of passionate waters and sighing of pine-branches in the night.

§ 29. Such is his view of human labor. Of human pride, see what records. Morpeth tower, roofless and black; gate of old Winchelsea wall, the flock of sheep driven *round* it, not through it; and Rievaulx choir, and Kirkstall crypt; and Dunstanborough, wan above the sea; and Chepstow, with arrowy light through traceried windows; and Lindisfarne, with failing height of wasted shaft and wall; and last and sweetest, Raglan, in utter solitude, amidst the wild wood of its own pleasance; the towers rounded with ivy, and the forest roots choked with undergrowth, and the brook languid amidst lilies and sedges. Legends of gray knights and en-

chanted ladies keeping the woodman's children away at the sunset.

These are his types of human pride. Of human love: Procris, dying by the arrow; Hesperie, by the viper's fang; and Rizpah, more than dead, beside her children.

§ 30. Such are the lessons of the Liber Studiorum. Silent always with a bitter silence, disdaining to tell his meaning, when he saw there was no ear to receive it, Turner only indicated this purpose by slight words of contemptuous anger, when he heard of any one's trying to obtain this or the other separate subject as more beautiful than the rest. "What is the use of them," he said, "but together?" * The meaning of the entire book was symbolized in the frontispiece, which he engraved with his own hand: Tyre at sunset, with the Rape of Europa, indicating the symbolism of the decay of Europe by that of Tyre, its beauty passing away into terror and judgment (Europa being the mother of Minos and Rhadamanthus).†

* Turner appears never to have desired, from any one, care in favor of his separate works. The only thing he would say sometimes was, "Keep them together." He seemed not to mind how much they were injured, if only the record of the thought were left in them, and they were kept in the series which would give the key to their meaning. I never saw him, at my father's house, look for an instant at any of his own drawings: I have watched him sitting at dinner nearly opposite one of his chief pictures—his eyes never turned to it.

But the want of appreciation, nevertheless, touched him sorely; chiefly the not understanding his meaning. He tried hard one day for a quarter of an hour to make me guess what he was doing in the picture of Napoleon, before it had been exhibited, giving me hint after hint in a rough way; but I could not guess, and he would not tell me.

† I limit myself in this book to mere indication of the tones of his mind, illustration of them at any length being as yet impossible. It will be found on examining the series of drawings made by Turner during the late years of his life, in possession of the nation, that they are nearly all made for the sake of some record of human power, partly victorious, partly conquered. There is hardly a single example of landscape painted for its own abstract beauty. Power and desola-

§ 31. I need not trace the dark clew farther, the reader may follow it unbroken through all his work and life,

tion, or soft pensiveness, are the elements sought chiefly in landscape; hence the later sketches are nearly all among mountain scenery, and chiefly of fortresses, villages or bridges and roads among the wildest Alps. The pass of the St. Gothard, especially, from his earliest days, had kept possession of his mind, not as a piece of mountain scenery, but as a marvellous road; and the great drawing which I have tried to illustrate with some care in this book, the last he made of the Alps with unfailing energy, was wholly made to show the surviving of this tormented path through avalanche and storm, from the day when he first drew its two bridges, in the Liber Studiorum. Plate 80, which is the piece of the torrent bed on the left, of the real size, where the stones of it appear just on the point of being swept away, and the ground we stand upon with them, completes the series of illustrations of this subject, for the present, sufficiently; and, if compared with Plate 79, will be serviceable, also, in showing how various in its grasp and its delight was this strange human mind, capable of all patience and all energy, and perfect in its sympathy whether with wrath or quietness. Though lingering always with chief affection about the St. Gothard pass, he seems to have gleaned the whole of Switzerland for every record he could find of grand human effort of any kind; I do not believe there is one baronial tower, one shattered arch of Alpine bridge, one gleaming tower of decayed village or deserted monastery, which he has not drawn; in many cases, round and round, again and again, on every side. Now that I have done this work, I purpose, if life and strength are spared to me, to trace him through these last journeys, and take such record of his best-beloved places as may fully interpret the designs he left. I have given in the three following plates an example of the kind of work which needs doing, and which, as stated in the preface, I have partly already begun. Plate 81 represents roughly two of Turner's memoranda of a bridge over the Rhine. They are quite imperfectly represented, because I do not choose to take any trouble about them on this scale. If I can engrave them at all, it must be of their own size; but they are enough to give an idea of the way he used to walk round a place, taking sketch after sketch of its aspects, from every point or half-point of the compass. There are three other sketches of this bridge, far more detailed than these, in the National Gallery.

A scratched word on the back of one of them, "Rheinfels," which I knew could not apply to the Rheinfels near Bingen, gave me the clew to the place;—an old Swiss town, seventeen miles above Basle, celebrated in Swiss history as the main fortress defending the frontier to-

PLATE LXXXI.—THE NETS IN THE RAPIDS.

PLATE LXXXII.—THE BRIDGE OF RHEINFELDEN.

PLATE LXXXIII.—PEACE.

this thread of Atropos.* I will only point, in conclusion, to the intensity with which his imagination dwelt always

ward the Black Forest. I went there the moment I had got Turner's sketches arranged in 1858, and drew it with the pen (or point of brush, more difficult to manage, but a better instrument) on every side on which Turner had drawn it, giving every detail with servile accuracy, so as to show the exact modifications he made as he composed his subjects. Mr. Le Keux has beautifully copied two of these studies, Plates 82 and 83; the first of these is the bridge drawn from the spot whence Turner made his upper memorandum; afterwards, he went down close to the fishing house, and took the second; in which he unhesitatingly divides the Rhine by a strong pyramidal rock, in order to get a group of firm lines pointing to his main subject, the tower (compare § 12, p. 222, above); and throws a foaming mass of water away to the left, in order to give a better idea of the river's force; the modifications of form in the tower itself are all skilful and majestic in the highest degree. The throwing the whole of it higher than the bridge, taking off the peak from its gable on the left, and adding the little roof-window in the centre, make it a perfectly noble mass, instead of a broken and common one. I have added the other subject, Plate 83,—though I could not give the Turner drawing which it illustrates,—merely to show the kind of scene which modern ambition and folly are destroying throughout Switzerland. In Plate 82, a small dark tower is seen in the distance, just on the left of the tower of the bridge. Getting round nearly to the foot of it, on the outside of the town, and then turning back so as to put the town walls on your right, you may, I hope, still see the subject of the third plate; the old bridge over the moat, and older wall and towers; the stork's nest on the top of the nearest one; the moat itself, now nearly filled with softest grass and flowers; a little mountain brook rippling down through the midst of them, and the first wooded promontory of the Jura beyond. Had Rheinfelden been a place of the least mark, instead of a nearly ruinous village, it is just this spot of ground which, costing little or nothing, would have been made its railroad station, and its refreshment room would have been built out of the stones of the towers.

* I have not followed out, as I ought to have done, had the task been less painful, my assertion that Turner had to paint not only the labor and the sorrow of men, but their death. There is no form of violent death which he has not painted. Pre-eminent in many things, he is pre-eminent also, bitterly, in this. Durer and Holbein drew the skeleton in its questioning; but Turner, like Salvator, as under some strange fascination or captivity, drew it at its work. Flood, and fire, and wreck, and battle, and pestilence; and solitary death, more fear-

on the three great cities of Carthage, Rome, and Venice —Carthage in connection especially with the thoughts and study which led to the painting of the Hesperides'

ful still. The noblest of all the plates of the Liber Studiorum, except the Via Mala, is one engraved with his own hand, of a single sailor, yet living, dashed in the night against a granite coast,—his body and outstretched hands just seen in the trough of a mountain wave, between it and the overhanging wall of rock, hollow, polished, and pale with dreadful cloud and grasping foam.

And remember, also, that the very sign in heaven itself which, truly understood, is the type of love, was to Turner the type of death. The scarlet of the clouds was his symbol of destruction. In his mind it was the color of blood. So he used it in the Fall of Carthage. Note his own written words—

> "While o'er the western wave the *ensanguined* sun,
> In gathering huge a stormy signal spread,
> And set portentous."

So he used it in the Slaver, in the Ulysses, in the Napoleon, in the Goldau; again and again in slighter hints and momentary dreams, of which one of the saddest and most tender is a little sketch of dawn, made in his last years. It is a small space of level sea-shore; beyond it a fair, soft light in the east; the last storm-clouds melting away, oblique into the morning air; some little vessel—a collier, probably—has gone down in the night, all hands lost; a single dog has come ashore. Utterly exhausted, its limbs failing under it, and, sinking into the sand, it stands howling and shivering. The dawn-clouds have the first scarlet upon them, a feeble tinge only, reflected with the same feeble blood-stain on the sand.

The morning light is used with a loftier significance in a drawing made as a companion to the Goldau, engraved in the fourth volume. The Lake of Zug, which ripples beneath the sunset in the Goldau, is lulled in the level azure of early cloud; and the spire of Aart, which is there a dark point at the edge of the golden lake, is, in the opening light, seen pale against purple mountains. The sketches for these two subjects were, I doubt not, made from the actual effects of a stormy evening, and the next following daybreak; but both with earnest meaning. The crimson sunset lights the valley of rock tombs, cast upon it by the fallen Rossberg; but the sunrise gilds with its level rays the two peaks which protect the village that gives name to Switzerland; and the orb itself breaks first through the darkness on the very point of the pass to the high lake of Egeri, where the liberties of the cantons were won by the battle-charge of Morgarten.

Garden, showing the death which attends the vain pursuit of wealth; Rome, showing the death which attends the vain pursuit of power; Venice, the death which attends the vain pursuit of beauty.

How strangely significative, thus understood, those last Venetian dreams of his become, themselves so beautiful and so frail; wrecks of all that they were once—twilights of twilight!

§ 32. Vain beauty; yet not all in vain. Unlike in birth, how like in their labor, and their power over the future, these masters of England and Venice—Turner and Giorgione. But ten years ago, I saw the last traces of the greatest works of Giorgione yet glowing, like a scarlet cloud, on the Fondaco de Tedeschi.* And though that

* I have engraved, at the beginning of this chapter, one of the fragments of these frescos, preserved, all imperfectly indeed, yet with some feeling of their noblencss, by Zanetti, whose words respecting them I have quoted in the text. The one I saw was the first figure given in his book; the one engraved in my Plate, the third, had wholly perished; but even this record of it by Zanetti is precious. What imperfections of form exist in it, too visibly, are certainly less Giorgione's than the translator's; nevertheless, for these very faults, as well as for its beauty, I have chosen it, as the best type I could give of the strength of Venetian art; which was derived, be it remembered always, from the acceptance of natural truth, by men who loved beauty too well to think she was to be won by falsehood.

The words of Zanetti himself respecting Giorgione's figure of Diligence are of great value, as they mark this first article of Venetian faith: "Giorgione per tale, o per altra che vi fosse, contrassegnolla con quella spezie di mannaja che tiene in mano; per altro tanto ci cercava le sole bellezze della natura, che poco pensando al costume, ritrasse qui una di quelle donne Friulane, che vengono per servire in Venezia; non alterandone nemmeno l'abito, è facendola alquanto attempeta, quale forse ci la vedea; senza voler sapere che per rappresentare le Virtù, si suole da pittori belle è fresche giovani immaginare."

Compare with this what I have said of Titian's Magdalen. I ought in that place to have dwelt also upon the firm endurance of all terribleness which is marked in Titian's "Notomie" and in Veronese's "Marsyas." In order to understand the Venetian mind entirely, the student should place a plate from that series of the Notomie always beside the best engraving he can obtain of Titian's "Flora."

scarlet cloud (sanguigna e fiammeggiante, per cui le pitture cominciarono con dolce violenza a rapire il cuore delle genti) may, indeed, melt away into paleness of night, and Venice herself waste from her islands as a wreath of wind-driven foam fades from their weedy beach;—that which she won of faithful light and truth shall never pass away. Deiphobe of the sea,—the Sun God measures her immortality to her by its sand. Flushed, above the Avernus of the Adrian lake, her spirit is still seen holding the golden bough; from the lips of the Sea Sibyl men shall learn for ages yet to come what is most noble and most fair; and, far away, as the whisper in the coils of the shell, withdrawn through the deep hearts of nations, shall sound forever the enchanted voice of Venice.

My impression is that the ground of the flesh in these Giorgione frescos had been pure vermilion; little else was left in the figure I saw. Therefore, not knowing what power the painter intended to personify by the figure at the commencement of this chapter, I have called her, from her glowing color, Hesperid Æglé.

PLATE LXXXIV.—MONTE ROSA. SUNSET.

CHAPTER XII.

PEACE.

§ 1. Looking back over what I have written, I find that I have only now the power of ending this work; it being time that it should end, but not of "concluding" it; for it has led me into fields of infinite inquiry, where it is only possible to break off with such imperfect result as may, at any given moment, have been attained.

Full of far deeper reverence for Turner's art than I felt when this task of his defence was undertaken (which may, perhaps, be evidenced by my having associated no other names with his—but of the dead,—in my speaking of him throughout this volume),* I am more in doubt respecting the real use to mankind of that, or any other transcendent art; incomprehensible as it must always be to the mass of men. Full of far deeper love for what I remember of Turner himself, as I become better capable of understanding it, I find myself more and more helpless to explain his errors and his sins.

§ 2. His errors, I might say, simply. Perhaps, some day, people will again begin to remember the force of

* It is proper, however, for the reader to know, that the title which I myself originally intended for this book was "*Turner and the Ancients;*" nor did I purpose to refer in it to any other modern painters than Turner. The title was changed; and the notes on other living painters inserted in the first volume, in deference to the advice of friends, probably wise; for unless the change had been made, the book might never have been read at all. But, as far as I am concerned, I regretted the change then, and regret it still.

the old Greek word for sin; and to learn that all sin is in essence—"Missing the mark;" losing sight or consciousness of heaven; and that this loss may be various in its guilt: it cannot be judged by us. It is this of which the words are spoken so sternly, "Judge not;" which words people always quote, I observe, when they are called upon to "do judgment and justice." For it is truly a pleasant thing to condemn men for their wanderings; but it is a bitter thing to acknowledge a truth, or to take any bold share in working out an equity. So that the habitual modern practical application of the precept, "Judge not," is to avoid the trouble of pronouncing verdict, by taking, of any matter, the pleasantest malicious view which first comes to hand; and to obtain license for our own convenient iniquities, by being indulgent to those of others.

These two methods of obedience being just the two which are most directly opposite to the law of mercy and truth.

§ 3. "Bind them about thy neck." I said, but now, that of an evil tree men never gathered good fruit. And the lesson we have finally to learn from Turner's life is broadly this, that all the power of it came of its mercy and sincerity; all the failure of it, from its want of faith. It has been asked of me, by several of his friends, that I should endeavor to do some justice to his character, mistaken wholly by the world. If my life is spared, I will. But that character is still, in many respects, inexplicable to me; the materials within my reach are imperfect; and my experience in the world not yet large enough to enable me to use them justly. His life is to be written by a biographer, who will, I believe, spare no pains in collecting the few scattered records which exist of a career so uneventful and secluded. I will not anticipate the conclusions of this writer; but if they appear to me just, will endeavor afterwards, so far as may be in

my power, to confirm and illustrate them; and, if unjust, to show in what degree.

§ 4. Which, lest death or illness should forbid me, this only I declare now of what I know respecting Turner's character. Much of his mind and heart I do not know —perhaps, never shall know. But this much I do; and if there is anything in the previous course of this work to warrant trust in me of any kind, let me be trusted when I tell you, that Turner had a heart as intensely kind, and as nobly true, as ever God gave to one of his creatures. I offer, as yet, no evidence in this matter. When I *do* give it, it shall be sifted and clear. Only this one fact I now record joyfully and solemnly, that, having known Turner for ten years, and that during the period of his life when the brightest qualities of his mind were, in many respects, diminished, and when he was suffering most from the evil speaking of the world, I never heard him say one depreciating word of living man, or man's work; I never saw him look an unkind or blameful look; I never knew him let pass, without some sorrowful remonstrance, or endeavor at mitigation, a blameful word spoken by another.

Of no man but Turner, whom I have ever known, could I say this. And of this kindness and truth * came, I re-

* It may perhaps be necessary to explain one or two singular points of Turner's character, not in defence of this statement, but to show its meaning. In speaking of his truth, I use the word in a double sense;—truth to himself, and to others.

Truth to himself; that is to say, the resolution to do his duty by his art, and carry all work out as well as it could be done. Other painters, for the most part, modify their work by some reference to public taste, or measure out a certain quantity of it for a certain price, or alter facts to show their power. Turner never did any of these things. The thing the public asked of him he would do, but whatever it was, only as *he* thought it ought to be done. People did not buy his large pictures; he, with avowed discontent, painted small ones; but instead of taking advantage of the smaller size to give, proportionally, less labor, he instantly changed his execution so as to be able to put nearly

peat, all his highest power. And all his failure and error, deep and strange, came of his faithlessness.

Faithlessness, or despair, the despair which has been shown already (Vol. III., chap. xvi.) to be characteristic

as much work into his small drawings as into his large ones, though he gave them for half the price. But his aim was always to make the drawing as good as he could, or as the subject deserved, irrespective of price. If he disliked his theme, he painted it slightly, utterly disdainful of the purchaser's complaint. "The purchaser must take his chance." If he liked his theme, he would give three hundred guineas' worth of work for a hundred, and ask no thanks. It is true, exceptionally, that he altered the engravings from his designs, so as to meet the popular taste, but this was because he knew the public could not be got otherwise to look at his art at all. His own drawings the entire body of the nation repudiated and despised: "the engravers could make something of them," they said. Turner scornfully took them at their word. If that is what you like, take it. I will not alter my own noble work one jot for you, but these things you shall have to your minds;—try to use them, and get beyond them. Sometimes, when an engraver came with a plate to be touched, he would take a piece of white chalk in his right hand and of black in his left: "Which will you have it done with?" The engraver chose black or white, as he thought his plate weak or heavy. Turner threw the other piece of chalk away, and would reconstruct the plate, with the added lights or darks, in ten minutes. Nevertheless, even this concession to false principles, so far as it had influence, was injurious to him: he had better not have scorned the engravings, but either done nothing with them, or done his best. His best, in a certain way, he did, never sparing pains, if he thought the plate worth it: some of his touched proofs are elaborate drawings.

Of his earnestness in his main work, enough, I should think, has been already related in this book; but the following anecdote, which I repeat here from my notes on the Turner Gallery, that there may be less chance of its being lost, gives, in a few words, and those his own, the spirit of his labor, as it possessed him throughout his life. The anecdote was communicated to me in a letter by Mr. Kingsley, late of Sidney College, Cambridge; whose words I give:—"I had taken my mother and a cousin to see Turner's pictures; and, as my mother knows nothing about art, I was taking her down the gallery to look at the large Richmond Park, but as we were passing the Sea-storm, she stopped before it, and I could hardly get her to look at any other picture: and she told me a great deal more about it than I had any notion of, though I had seen many sea-storms. She had been in such

of this present century, and most sorrowfully manifested in its greatest men; but existing in an infinitely more fatal form in the lower and general mind, reacting upon those who ought to be its teachers.

a scene on the coast of Holland during the war. When, some time afterwards, I thanked Turner for his permission for her to see the pictures, I told him that he would not guess which had caught my mother's fancy, and then named the picture; and he then said, 'I did not paint it to be understood, but I wished to show what such a scene was like: I got the sailors to lash me to the mast to observe it; I was lashed for four hours, and I did not expect to escape, but I felt bound to record it if I did. But no one had any business to like the picture.' 'But,' said I, 'my mother once went through just such a scene, and it brought it all back to her.' 'Is your mother a painter?' 'No.' 'Then she ought to have been thinking of something else.' These were nearly his words; I observed at the time, he used 'record' and 'painting,' as the title 'author' had struck me before."

He was true to others. No accusation had ever been brought forward against Turner by his most envious enemies, of his breaking a promise, or failing in an undertaken trust. His sense of justice was strangely acute; it was like his sense of balance in color, and shown continually in little crotchets of arrangement of price, or other advantages, among the buyers of his pictures. For instance, one of my friends had long desired to possess a picture which Turner would not sell. It had been painted with a companion; which was sold, but this reserved. After a considerable number of years had passed, Turner consented to part with it. The price of canvases of its size having, in the meantime, doubled, question arose as to what was then to be its price. "Well," said Turner, "Mr.—— had the companion for so much. You must be on the same footing." This was in no desire to do my friend a favor; but in mere instinct of equity. Had the price of his pictures fallen, instead of risen in the meantime, Turner would have said, "Mr. —— paid so much, and so must you."

But the best proof to which I can refer in this character of his mind is in the wonderful series of diagrams executed by him for his lectures on perspective at the Royal Academy. I had heard it said that these lectures were inefficient. Barely intelligible in expression they might be; but the zealous care with which Turner endeavored to do his duty, is proved by a series of large drawings, exquisitely tinted, and often completely colored, all by his own hand, of the most difficult perspective subjects; illustrating not only directions of line, but effects of light, with a care and completion which would put the work of any ordinary teacher to utter shame. In teaching generally, he

§ 5. The form which the infidelity of England, especially, has taken, is one hitherto unheard of in human history. No nation ever before declared boldly, by print and word of mouth, that its religion was good for

would neither waste his time nor spare it; he would look over a student's drawing, at the academy,—point to a defective part, make a scratch on the paper at the side, saying nothing; if the student saw what was wanted, and did it, Turner was delighted, and would go on with him, giving hint after hint; but if the student could not follow, Turner left him. Such experience as I have had in teaching, leads me more and more to perceive that he was right. Explanations are wasted time. A man who can see, understands a touch; a man who cannot, misunderstands an oration.

One of the points in Turner which increased the general falseness of impression respecting him was a curious dislike he had to *appear* kind. Drawing, with one of his best friends, at the bridge of St. Martin's, the friend got into great difficulty over a colored sketch. Turner looked over him a little while, then said, in a grumbling way —"I haven't got any paper I like; let me try yours." Receiving a block book, he disappeared for an hour and a half. Returning, he threw the book down, with a growl, saying—"I can't make anything of your paper." There were three sketches on it, in three distinct states of progress, showing the process of coloring from beginning to end, and clearing up every difficulty which his friend had got into. When he gave advice, also, it was apt to come in the form of a keen question, or a quotation of some one else's opinion, rarely a statement of his own. To the same person producing a sketch, which had no special character: "What are you in *search* of?" Note this expression. Turner knew that passionate seeking only leads to passionate finding. Sometimes, however, the advice would come with a startling distinctness. A church spire having been left out in a sketch of a town—"Why did you not put that in?" "I hadn't time." "Then you should take a subject more suited to your capacity."

Many people would have gone away considering this an insult, whereas it was only a sudden flash from Turner's earnest requirement of wholeness or perfectness of conception. "Whatever you do, large or small, do it wholly; take a slight subject if you will, but don't leave things out." But the principal reason for Turner's having got the reputation of always refusing advice was, that artists came to him in a state of mind in which he knew they could not receive it. Virtually, the entire conviction of the artists of his time respecting him was, that he had got a secret, which he could tell, if he liked, that would make them all Turners. They came to him with this general

show, but "would not work." Over and over again it has happened that nations have denied their gods, but they denied them bravely. The Greeks in their decline jested at their religion, and frittered it away in flatteries and fine arts; the French refused theirs fiercely, tore down their altars and brake their carven images. The question about God with both these nations was still, even in their decline, fairly put, though falsely answered. "Either there is or is not a Supreme Ruler; we consider of it, declare there is not, and proceed accordingly." But we English have put the matter in an entirely new light: "There *is* a Supreme Ruler, no question of it, only He cannot rule. His orders won't work. He will be quite satisfied with euphonious and respectful repetition of them. Execution would be too dangerous under existing circumstances, which He certainly never contemplated."

formula of request clearly in their hearts, if not definitely on their lips: "You know, Mr. Turner, we are all of us quite as clever as you are, and could do all that very well, and we should really like to do a little of it occasionally, only we haven't quite your trick; there's something in it, of course, which you only found out by accident, and it is very ill-natured and unkind of you not to tell us how the thing is done; what do you rub your colors over with, and where ought we to put in the black patches?" This was the practical meaning of the artistical questioning of his day, to which Turner very resolvedly made no answer. On the contrary, he took great care that any tricks of execution he actually did use should not be known.

His *practical* answer to their questioning being as follows:—"You are indeed, many of you, as clever as I am; but this, which you think a secret, is only the result of sincerity and toil. If you have not sense enough to see this without asking me, you have not sense enough to believe me, if I tell you. True, I know some odd methods of coloring. I have found them out for myself, and they suit me. They would not suit you. They would do you no real good; and it would do me much harm to have you mimicking my ways of work, without knowledge of their meaning. If you want methods fit for you, find them out for yourselves. If you cannot discover them, neither could you use them."

I had no conception of the absolute darkness which has covered the national mind in this respect, until I began to come into collision with persons engaged in the study of economical and political questions. The entire naïveté and undisturbed imbecility with which I found them declare that the laws of the Devil were the only practicable ones, and that the laws of God were merely a form of poetical language, passed all that I had ever before heard or read of mortal infidelity. I knew the fool had often said in his heart, there was *no* God; but to hear him say clearly out with his lips, "There is a foolish God," was something which my art studies had not prepared me for. The French had indeed, for a considerable time, hinted much of the meaning in the delicate and compassionate blasphemy of their phrase, "*le bon Dieu*," but had never ventured to put it into more precise terms.

§ 6. Now this form of unbelief in God is connected with, and necessarily productive of, a precisely equal unbelief in man.

Co-relative with the assertion, "There is a foolish God," is the assertion, "There is a brutish man." "As no laws but those of the Devil are practicable in the world, so no impulses but those of the brute" (says the modern political economist) "are appealable to in the world." Faith, generosity, honesty, zeal, and self-sacrifice are poetical phrases. None of these things can, in reality, be counted upon; there is no truth in man which can be used as a moving or productive power. All motive force in him is essentially brutish, covetous, or contentious. His power is only power of prey: otherwise than the spider, he cannot design; otherwise than the tiger, he cannot feed. This is the modern interpretation of that embarrassing article of the Creed, "the communion of saints."

§ 7. It has always seemed very strange to me, not in-

deed that this creed should have been adopted, it being the entirely necessary consequence of the previous fundamental article;—but that no one should ever seem to have any misgivings about it;—that, practically, no one had *seen* how strong work *was* done by man; how either for hire, or for hatred, it never had been done; and that no amount of pay had ever made a good soldier, a good teacher, a good artist, or a good workman. You pay your soldiers and sailors so many pence a day, at which rated sum one will do good fighting for you; another, bad fighting. Pay as you will, the entire goodness of the fighting depends, always, on its being done for nothing; or rather, less than nothing, in the expectation of no pay but death. Examine the work of your spiritual teachers, and you will find the statistical law respecting them is, "The less pay, the better work." Examine also your writers and artists: for ten pounds you shall have a Paradise Lost, and for a plate of figs, a Durer drawing; but for a million of money sterling, neither. Examine your men of science: paid by starvation, Kepler will discover the laws of the orbs of heaven for you;—and, driven out to die in the street, Swammerdam shall discover the laws of life for you—such hard terms do they make with you, these brutish men, who can only be had for hire.

§ 8. Neither is good work ever done for hatred, any more than hire—but for love only. For love of their country, or their leader, or their duty, men fight steadily; but for massacre and plunder, feebly. Your signal, "England expects every man to do his duty," they will answer; your signal of black flag and death's head, they will not answer. And verily they will answer it no more in commerce than in battle. The cross bones will not make a good shop-sign, you will find ultimately, any more than a good battle-standard. Not the cross bones, but the cross.

§ 9. Now the practical result of this infidelity in man, is the utter ignorance of all the ways of getting his right work out of him. From a given quantity of human power and intellect, to produce the least possible result, is a problem solved, nearly with mathematical precision, by the present methods of the nation's economical procedure. The power and intellect are enormous. With the best soldiers, at present existing, we survive in battle, and but survive, because, by help of Providence, a man whom we have kept all his life in command of a company forces his way at the age of seventy so far up as to obtain permission to save us, and die, unthanked. With the shrewdest thinkers in the world, we have not yet succeeded in arriving at any national conviction respecting the uses of life. And with the best artistical material in the world, we spend millions of money in raising a building for our Houses of Talk, of the delightfulness and utility of which (perhaps roughly classing the Talk and its tabernacle together), posterity will, I believe, form no very grateful estimate;—while for sheer want of bread, we brought the question to the balance of a hair, whether the most earnest of our young painters should give up his art altogether, and go to Australia, — or fight his way through all neglect and obloquy to the painting of the Christ in the Temple.

§ 10. The marketing was indeed done in this case, as in all others, on the usual terms. For the millions of money, we got a mouldering toy: for the starvation, five years' work of the prime of a noble life. Yet neither that picture, great as it is, nor any other of Hunt's, are the best he could have done. They are the least he could have done. By no expedient could we have repressed him more than he has been repressed; by no abnegation received from him less than we have received.

My dear friend and teacher, Lowell, right as he is in

almost everything, is for once wrong in these lines, though with a noble wrongness :—

> " Disappointment's dry and bitter root,
> Envy's harsh berries, and the choking pool
> Of the world's scorn, are the right mother-milk
> To the tough hearts that pioneer their kind."

They are not so; love and trust are the only mother-milk of any man's soul. So far as he is hated and mistrusted, his powers are destroyed. Do not think that with impunity you can follow the eyeless fool, and shout with the shouting charlatan; and that the men you thrust aside with gibe and blow, are thus sneered and crushed into the best service they can do you. I have told you they *will* not serve you for pay. They *cannot* serve you for scorn. Even from Balaam, money-lover though he be, no useful prophecy is to be had for silver or gold. From Elisha, savior of life though he be, no saving of life—even of children's, who "knew no better" —is to be got by the cry, Go up, thou bald-head. No man can serve you either for purse or curse; neither kind of pay will answer. No pay is, indeed, receivable by any true man; but power is receivable by him, in the love and faith you give him. So far only as you give him these can he serve you; that is the meaning of the question which his Master asks always, "Believest thou that I am able?" And from every one of His servants—to the end of time—if you give them the Capernaum measure of faith, you shall have from them Capernaum measure of works, and no more.

Do not think that I am irreverently comparing great and small things. The system of the world is entirely one; small things and great are alike part of one mighty whole. As the flower is gnawed by frost, so every human heart is gnawed by faithlessness. And as surely,—as irrevocably,—as the fruit-bud falls before the east wind,

so fails the power of the kindest human heart, if you meet it with poison.

§ 11. Now the condition of mind in which Turner did all his great work was simply this: "What I do must be done rightly; but I know also that no man now living in Europe cares to understand it; and the better I do it, the less he will see the meaning of it." There never was yet, so far as I can hear or read, isolation of a great spirit so utterly desolate. Columbus had succeeded in making other hearts share his hope, before he was put to hardest trial; and knew that, by help of Heaven, he could finally show that he was right. Kepler and Galileo could demonstrate their conclusions up to a certain point; so far as they felt they were right, they were sure that after death their work would be acknowledged. But Turner could demonstrate nothing of what he had done—saw no security that after death he would be understood more than he had been in life. Only another Turner could apprehend Turner. Such praise as he received was poor and superficial; he regarded it far less than censure. My own admiration of him was wild in enthusiasm, but it gave him no ray of pleasure; he could not make me at that time understand its main meanings; he loved me, but cared nothing for what I said, and was always trying to hinder me from writing, because it gave pain to his fellow-artists. To the praise of other persons he gave not even the acknowledgment of this sad affection; it passed by him as murmur of the wind; and most justly, for not one of his own special powers was ever perceived by the world. I have said in another place that all great modern artists will own their obligation to him as a guide. They will; but they are in error in this gratitude, as I was, when I quoted it as a sign of their respect. Close analysis of the portions of modern art founded on Turner has since shown me that in every case his imitators misunderstood him:—that they caught

merely at superficial brilliancies, and never saw the real character of his mind or his work.

And at this day, while I write, the catalogue allowed to be sold at the gates of the National Gallery for the instruction of the common people, describes Calcott and Claude as the greater artists.

§ 12. To censure, on the other hand, Turner was acutely sensitive, owing to his own natural kindness; he felt it, for himself, or for others, not as criticism, but as cruelty. He knew that however little his higher powers could be seen, he had at least done as much as ought to have saved him from wanton insult; and the attacks upon him in his later years were to him not merely contemptible in their ignorance, but amazing in their ingratitude. "A man may be weak in his age," he said to me once, at the time when he felt he was dying; "but you should not tell him so."

§ 13. What Turner might have done for us, had he received help and love, instead of disdain, I can hardly trust myself to imagine. Increasing calmly in power and loveliness, his work would have formed one mighty series of poems, each great as that which I have interpreted,—the Hesperides; but becoming brighter and kinder as he advanced to happy age. Soft as Correggio's, solemn as Titian's, the enchanted color would have glowed, imperishable and pure; and the subtle thoughts risen into loftiest teaching, helpful for centuries to come.

What we have asked from him, instead of this, and what received, we know. But few of us yet know how true an image those darkening wrecks of radiance give of the shadow which gained sway over his once pure and noble soul.

§ 14. Not unresisted, nor touching the heart's core, nor any of the old kindness and truth: yet festering work of the worm—inexplicable and terrible, such as England,

by her goodly gardening, leaves to infect her earth-flowers.

So far as in it lay, this century has caused every one of its great men, whose hearts were kindest, and whose spirits most perceptive of the work of God, to die without hope:—Scott, Keats, Byron, Shelley, Turner. Great England, of the Iron-heart now, not of the Lion-heart; for these souls of her children an account may perhaps be one day required of her.

§ 15. She has not yet read often enough that old story of the Samaritan's mercy. He whom he saved was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho—to the accursed city (so the old Church used to understand it). He should not have left Jerusalem; it was his own fault that he went out into the desert, and fell among the thieves, and was left for dead. Every one of these English children, in their day, took the desert bypath, as he did, and fell among fiends—took to making bread out of stones at their bidding, and then died, torn and famished; careful England, in her pure, priestly dress, passing by on the other side. So far as we are concerned, that is the account *we* have to give of them.*

§ 16. So far as *they* are concerned, I do not fear for them;—there being one Priest who never passes by. The longer I live, the more clearly I see how all souls are in His hand—the mean and the great. Fallen on the earth in their baseness, or fading as the mist of morning in their goodness; still in the hand of the potter as the clay, and in the temple of their master as the cloud. It was not the mere bodily death that He conquered—that death had no sting. It was this spiritual death which He conquered, so that at last it should

* It is strange that the last words Turner ever attached to a picture should have been these:—

"The priest held the poisoned cup."

Compare the words of 1798 with those of 1850.

be swallowed up—mark the word—not in life; but in victory. As the dead body shall be raised to life, so also the defeated soul to victory, if only it has been fighting on its Master's side, has made no covenant with death; nor itself bowed its forehead for his seal. Blind from the prison-house, maimed from the battle, or mad from the tombs, their souls shall surely yet sit, astonished, at His feet who giveth peace.

§ 17. Who *giveth* peace? Many a peace we have made and named for ourselves, but the falsest is in that marvellous thought that we, of all generations of the earth, only know the right; and that to us, at last,—and us alone,—all the scheme of God, about the salvation of men, has been shown. "This is the light in which *we* are walking. Those vain Greeks are gone down to their Persephone forever—Egypt and Assyria, Elam and her multitude,—uncircumcised, their graves are round about them—Pathros and careless Ethiopia—filled with the slain. Rome, with her thirsty sword, and poison wine, how did she walk in her darkness! We only have no idolatries—ours are the seeing eyes; in our pure hands at last, the seven-sealed book is laid; to our true tongues intrusted the preaching of a perfect gospel. Who shall come after us? Is it not peace? The poor Jew, Zimri, who slew his master, there is no peace for him: but, for us? tiara on head, may we not look out of the windows of heaven?"

§ 18. Another kind of peace I look for than this, though I hear it said of me that I am hopeless.

I am not hopeless, though my hope may be as Veronese's, the dark-veiled.

Veiled, not because sorrowful, but because blind. I do not know what my England desires, or how long she will choose to do as she is doing now;—with her right hand casting away the souls of men, and with her left the gifts of God.

In the prayers which she dictates to her children, she tells them to fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Some day, perhaps, it may also occur to her as desirable to tell those children what she means by this. What is the world which they are to "fight with," and how does it differ from the world which they are to "get on in?" The explanation seems to me the more needful, because I do not, in the book we profess to live by, find anything very distinct about fighting with the world. I find something about fighting with the rulers of its darkness, and something also about overcoming it; but it does not follow that this conquest is to be by hostility, since evil may be overcome with good. But I find it written very distinctly that God loved the world, and that Christ is the light of it.

§ 19. What the much-used words, therefore, mean, I cannot tell. But this, I believe, they *should* mean. That there is, indeed, one world which is full of care, and desire, and hatred: a world of war, of which Christ is not the light, which indeed is without light, and has never heard the great "Let there be." Which is, therefore, in truth, as yet no world; but chaos, on the face of which, moving, the Spirit of God yet causes men to hope that a world will come. The better one, they call it: perhaps they might, more wisely, call it the real one. Also, I hear them speak continually of going to it, rather than of its coming to them; which, again, is strange, for in that prayer which they had straight from the lips of the Light of the world, and which He apparently thought sufficient prayer for them, there is not anything about going to another world; only something of another government coming into this; or rather, not another, but the only government,—that government which will constitute it a world indeed. New heavens and new earth. Earth, no more without form and void, but sown with fruit of righteousness.

Firmament, no more of passing cloud, but of cloud risen out of the crystal sea—cloud in which, as He was once received up, so He shall again come with power, and every eye shall see Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him.'

Kindreds of the earth, or tribes of it!*—the "earth-begotten," the Chaos children—children of this present world, with its desolate seas and its Medusa clouds: the Dragon children, merciless: they who dealt as clouds without water: serpent clouds, by whose sight men were turned into stone;—the time must surely come for their wailing.

§ 20. "Thy kingdom come," we are bid to ask then! But how shall it come? With power and great glory, it is written; and yet not with observation, it is also written. Strange kingdom! Yet its strangeness is renewed to us with every dawn.

When the time comes for us to wake out of the world's sleep, why should it be otherwise than out of the dreams of the night? Singing of birds, first, broken and low, as, not to dying eyes, but eyes that wake to life, "the casement slowly grows a glimmering square;" and then the gray, and then the rose of dawn; and last the light, whose going forth is to the ends of heaven.

This kingdom it is not in our power to bring; but it is, to receive. Nay, it has come already, in part; but not received, because men love chaos best; and the Night, with her daughters. That is still the only question for us, as in the old Elias days, "If ye will receive it." With pains it may be shut out still from many a dark place of cruelty; by sloth it may be still unseen for many a glorious hour. But the pain of shutting it out must grow greater and greater:—harder, every day, that struggle of man with man in the abyss, and shorter wages for the fiend's work. But it is still at our choice;

* Compare Matt. xxiv. 30.

the simoom-dragon may still be served if we will, in the fiery desert, or else God walking in the garden, at cool of day. Coolness now, not of Hesperus, over Atlas, stooped endurer of toil; but of Heosphorus over Sion, the joy of the earth.* The choice is no vague or doubtful one. High on the desert mountain, full descried, sits throned the tempter, with his old promise—the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them. He still calls you to your labor, as Christ to your rest;—labor and sorrow, base desire, and cruel hope. So far as you desire to possess, rather than to give; so far as you look for power to command, instead of to bless; so far as your own prosperity seems to you to issue out of contest or rivalry, of any kind, with other men, or other nations; so long as the hope before you is for supremacy instead of love; and your desire is to be greatest, instead of least;—first, instead of last;—so long you are serving the Lord of all that is last, and least;—the last enemy that shall be destroyed—Death; and you shall have death's crown, with the worm coiled in it; and death's wages with the worm feeding on them; kindred of the earth shall you yourself become; saying to the grave, "Thou art my father;" and to the worm, "Thou art my mother, and my sister."

I leave you to judge, and to choose, between this labor, and the bequeathed peace; this wages, and the gift of the Morning Star; this obedience, and the doing of the will which shall enable you to claim another kindred than of the earth, and to hear another voice than that of the grave, saying, "My brother, and sister, and mother."

* Ps. xlviii. 2.—This joy it is to receive and to give, because its officers (governors of its acts) are to be Peace, and its exactors (governors of its dealings), Righteousness.—Is. lx. 17.

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